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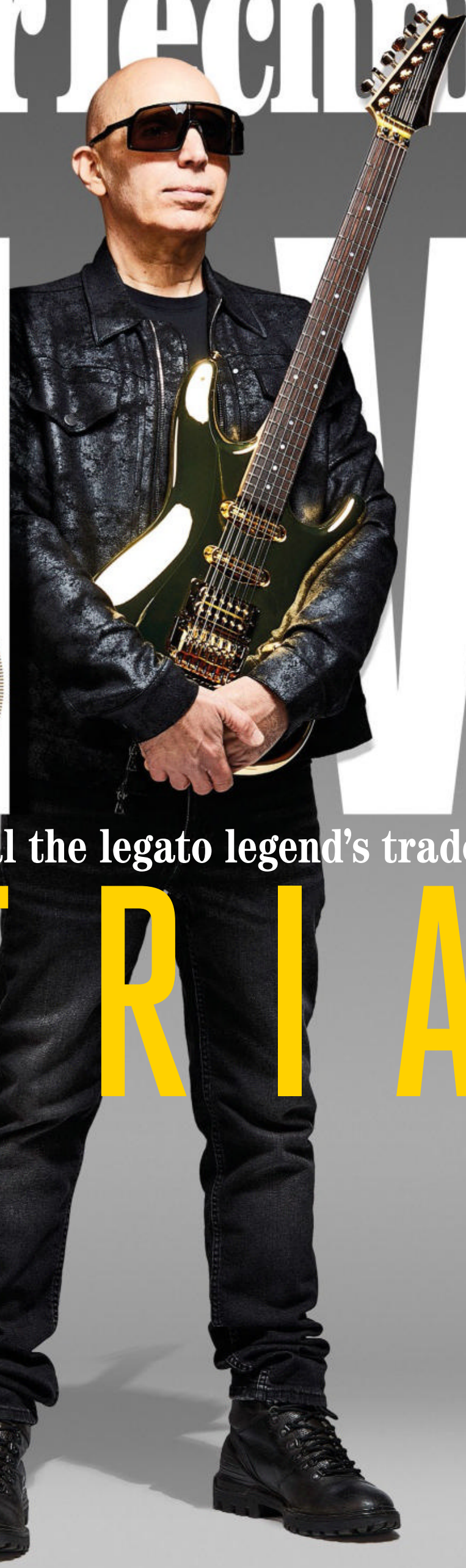
# GuitarTechniques

335 JUNE 2022



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**20 PLAYERS INCLUDING VAI & LUKATHER ON WHY JOE'S THE GREATEST**

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# SATRIANI

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### JUNIOR MARVIN
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### NITA STRAUSS
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### REMI HARRIS
10 exciting gypsy jazz licks to learn from this terrific UK guitarist

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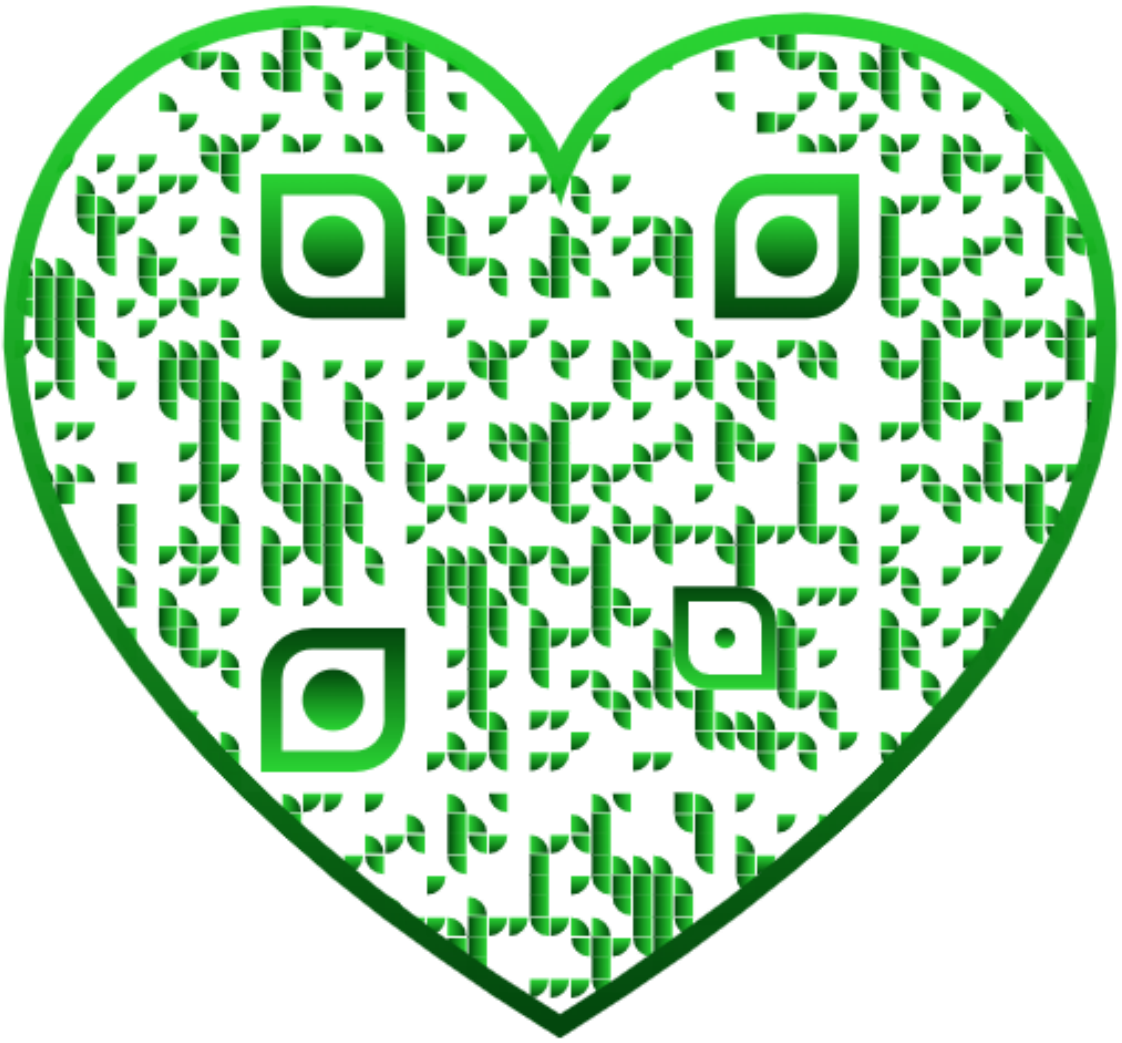

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## Just a few of your regular GT tuition experts...

**SIMON BARNARD**
Simon is a graduate of ACM and The Guitar Institute, holding a Masters degree in music. He teaches, examines and plays everything from rock to jazz.

**RICHARD BARRETT**
One of the most gifted guitarists around Richard has been playing with Tony Hadley for over 20 years. He's great in all styles but excels at blues and rock.

**JON BISHOP**
Jon is one of those great all-rounders who can turn his hand to almost any style. He's also rock legend Shakin' Stevens' touring and recording guitarist.

**MARTIN COOPER**
A tutor at BIMM Brighton, Martin's Rock columns show an incredible breadth of technique and style. His 2006 album State Of The Union is out on iTunes.

**CHARLIE GRIFFITHS**
Guitar Institute tutor Charlie first came to fame in Total Guitar's Challenge Charlie series. He's also guitarist with top UK metal-fusion band Haken.

**JAMIE HUNT**
Jamie is Principal Lecturer at BIMM Bristol. He also leads performance workshops, plays in metal band One Machine and is endorsed by ESP guitars.

**PHIL HILBORNE**
The UK's original magazine guitar tutor, Phil's something of a legend. A great player, he's got the Phil Hilborne Band back together so catch them if you can.

**JAMIE HUMPHRIES**
Jamie has played with many greats including Brian May. An ex-ACM tutor, you can find him at Jamie Humphries Guitar Studio on Facebook, for lessons.

**ANDY G JONES**
As well as being Head Of Guitar at LCCM Andy has played with innumerable top musicicans, from Sir Van Morrison and Dr Brian May, to Sir Cliff Richard & more.

**JACOB QUISTGAARD**
Quist has been with GT since 2009. Currently Bryan Ferry's guitarist, his YouTube channel is viewed by millions and he creates our monthly jam tracks.

**STUART RYAN**
Stuart Ryan is great at all styles but best known for his superb acoustic work. He was Head Of Guitar at BIMM Bristol and has many top tuition books to his name.

**PHIL SHORT**
You might recognise Phil from winning International Guitar Idol competition. But he also teaches at BIMM in London and is a busy session and touring player.

**JOHN WHEATCROFT**
A phenomenal guitarist, John is a master at all styles but a legend in Gypsy Jazz. His latest album Ensemble Futur is out now on iTunes and Amazon.

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# WELCOME

IT WAS late 1993 and I was chatting with one of Music Maker Publications' bosses in our offices in Cambridgeshire. The techniques section of Guitarist, the magazine I edited at the time, had become a huge success, with articles like music editor Phil Hilborne's transcriptions of great guitar solos often the first thing readers reached for.

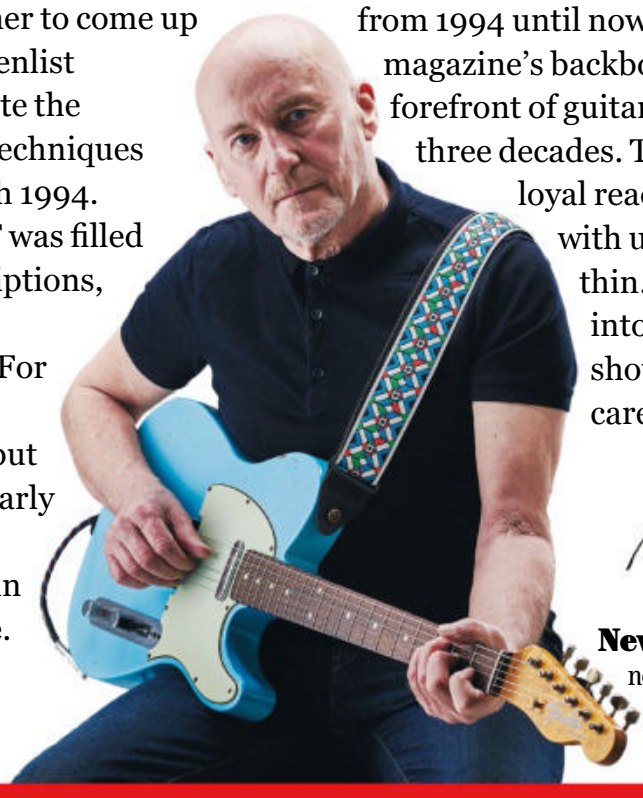
Instrumental rock was still 'a thing' but grunge was huge, as were glam metal and neo-classical rock. Guitar solos were still the rage and Steve Vai, and this month's cover star Joe Satriani, had made having musical knowledge *de rigueur*. Guitar institutes and academies were springing up to take advantage of this new desire for guitarists to 'learn properly'. So my boss and I reasoned we could hive off Guitarist's technique section, build on it and create a whole new magazine. Phil and I put our heads together to come up with a format, and to enlist suitable tutors to create the content, and Guitar Techniques sprang to life in March 1994.

For many years GT was filled with full song transcriptions, making it a soaraway, pre-internet success. For the first eight months the mag had no disc, but we instigated this in early 1995 and became the first guitar magazine in the world to carry one. With tutors including the young Guthrie Govan and Dave Kilminster (both Guitarist mag's Guitarists Of The Year) onboard, we were too cool for school. And almost 30 years on we're still here, even though magazine publishing has changed beyond all recognition, with digital editions, and now the audio and video content online.

Why am I telling you all this? Well, after editing Guitarist and GT on and off since 1986, I've decided to step down from the chair and take more of a back seat. I'll still sub GT's pages and continue writing articles for Guitarist, but Jason Sidwell will take over from me here.

Jason's passion for music, and for music tuition, has underpinned GT for more than two decades. His vision will steer the magazine on the next part of its journey, with both dedication and flair.

My thanks to every GT contributor from 1994 until now. You've been the magazine's backbone and kept us at the forefront of guitar tuition for almost three decades. Thanks, too, to our loyal readers who have stuck with us through thick and thin. I'm sure I'll bump into you at gigs or guitar shows so, until then, take care - and keep reading!



**Neville Marten, Editor**
neville.marten@futurenet.com

## DON'T MISS OUR AMAZING DIGITAL EDITION

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# CONTENTS



• ISSUE 335 • JUNE 2022 •

SUBSCRIBE TO GT!
PAGE 61

Joe Satriani is this month's well deserved cover artist

## FEATURES

### COVER FEATURE

**VIVA SATRIANI! Four Mini Pieces & more!** ..... 14
Jamie Humphries looks at the styles that make Joe so unique and admired. Plus: new Satriani interview, and a host of top players tell us their top Satch tracks and say why they love him.

### SPECIAL FEATURE

**THE CROSSROADS 10 Iconic 335 Players** ..... 38
John Wheatcroft celebrates GT's issue 335 with a super feature detailing the many styles that Gibson's semi and its brethren have inspired.

### CLASSICAL TAB

**JOHANN STRAUSS II Pizzicato Polka** ..... 44
Declan Zapala arranges a string section piece that we all know, and transfers it to the guitar.

## REGULARS

**WELCOME** ..... 3
Neville bids a 'not quite final' farewell...

**INTRO** ..... 6
Justin Sandercoe, Mitch Dalton, Phil Hilborne's One-Minute Lick, Quist's Jam Tracks tips.

**INSTRUMENTAL INQUISITION** ..... 8
We quiz Focus's amazing original guitarist, Jan Akkerman, about his work with instrumentals.

**SATRIANI, TRACK BY TRACK** ..... 12
We chat to Joe about every track from his fantastic new album, The Elephants Of Mars.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** ..... 61
Great offers at www.magazinesdirect.com.

**BACK ISSUES** ..... 69
Last six months of print edition still available, and several years of GT on digital too!

**ALBUM REVIEWS** ..... 81
New releases from top guitarists of the day.

**NEXT MONTH** ..... 82
Blues, Shuffle & Swing - blues rhythms. Steve Stevens video lesson. Plus: Pat Martino, Shawn Lane, Dire Straits, Reggae in pop, and more.

## LEARNING ZONE

**LESSONS INTRODUCTION** ..... 51
Jason Sidwell talks about his move to the editor's chair, plus a whole lot more.

**30-MINUTE LICKBAG** ..... 52
Sergio Pizzorno, Joe Perry, Warren Haynes, Jarius Mozee, Lee Ritenour, Joel Hoekstra.

**BLUES** ..... 54
Phil Short brings you two solos examining the Cream-era, ES-335 style of Eric Clapton.

**ROCK** ..... 58
Martin Cooper looks at a superb exponent of rock guitar, Alice Cooper's guitarist Nita Strauss.

**SHRED!** ..... 62
Charlie Griffiths has five licks from shred's most enigmatic guitar player, Ron 'Bumblefoot' Thal.

**REGGAE** ..... 66
Simon Barnard shows how to nail Bob Marley's more rocky 'steppers' reggae rhythm feel.

**GYPSY JAZZ** ..... 70
Remi Harris shows you more of his favourite gypsy jazz licks in his final GT article (for now).

**ACOUSTIC COUNTRY** ..... 74
Stuart Ryan continues his series on acoustic country pickers with unique genius, Chet Atkins.

**THEM CHANGES** ..... 77
Andy G Jones shows how to play convincing string bends to various Pentatonic intervals.

## EXCLUSIVE VIDEO!

**GEORGE MARIOS Video Exclusive (If You Will)** ..... 28
This brilliant young guitarist plays and explains a stunning solo on Jason Sidwell's latest track.

## AUDIO & VIDEO

### PLEASE NOTE...

**All audio and video lessons are available online via a bit.ly link (see below) where animated tab versions of every lesson can be found (the same as previously only available in our digital version). What's more, you can view these on any type of computer, making for a much more rewarding experience. All the audio and video (backing tracks, lessons, masterclasses, etc) is also available to download to your computer (hi or lo res). Simply look for the red links on the landing page. Type the bit.ly link below into your browser to get to the GT page:**

**https://bit.ly/3joL0ul**

COVER: JEN ROSENSTEIN

# JUSTIN SANDERCOE

*As one of the most successful guitar teachers, Justin lends us his insight into learning and playing guitar. This month:* ***The Pressure We Put On Ourselves.***

So Covid finally hit me! I'm writing from my bed, full of aches and moans so the topic for today seems remarkably applicable; the pressures and expectations we put on ourselves.

I don't like being late, and while I sometimes cut my submission for this article down to the wire, I dread it being late. So here I am writing on my laptop when I should be curled up on the sofa watching mindless TV. It's a pressure I put on myself, an expectation and something I commit myself to.

When it comes to playing and practising guitar, we all have pressures and expectations of what we can or should be able to do. Many times it seems we are unaware of them, and bringing them out into the light and examining them can be very helpful for our mental health.

The amount we practise is a good one to start with. I remember a children's song we used to sing at primary school... "I am a fine musician, I practise every day..." and I still feel like I should practise every day. But I don't. I have a guitar in my hand at some point most days, but it's not practice that might be improving my musicianship. And I often get disappointed in myself for not living up to this self-imposed ideal.

Justin says it's not good to burden yourself with too much expectation

to design a practice routine and then set aside time to work on specific things. Which is great when you are making time to practise regularly, but when you're trying to get back into regular practice, those kinds of pressures can be inhibiting. We worry that we might not have time to commit to the regularity.

***"PRESSURE AND EXPECTATIONS ARE ALSO THE ENEMY OF IMPROVISATION AND CAN PULL YOU 'OUT OF THE MOMENT'"***

Silly, right? But that kind of feeling is common in many professionals I know. It's almost a joke that when you get serious about studying an instrument you put a ton of hours into it, but once you become 'professional' you have hardly any time to play.

Taking away the pressure can make the whole practice experience a load more fun. Many people (including me) like

The answer is just to remove the pressure and remember that you are there to enjoy the instrument - and that learning music is all about the journey, not the destination. It's a cliché I know, but it's true. You should never stop learning, so there's no real destination anyway. Remember that the hardest part of practice is getting your bum on the chair! Start with a short practice with no goal, or expectations of a result, or you're setting yourself up for failure.

Pressure and expectations are also the enemy of improvisation and can pull you 'out of the moment'. When we're improvising we of course hope that we will come up with something cool, but 'trying' is rarely going to work. Preparation and relaxation is what's going to help you get in touch with your inner musician and really help you express something.

A songwriter friend once told me a story that he had the opportunity to write a song with George Harrison. He showed up at his place, sat down to get started and said something along the lines of "Let's write an incredible song," to which George replied, "How about we start by writing a really crappy one". I'm not certain it's true, although said friend did run in those circles. However, that's a great example of removing pressure and expectation to allow your natural musicianship to come through. Why add unnecessary pressure to any situation, especially such a creative one?

Pressure can come from external sources. For example, the pressure from a manager or record label to do a great show. In some situations that kind of thing can be helpful, but again, it's worth examining these pressures and understanding where they come from and what they mean. In this example, the pressure to do a great show is because they want you to do great and further your career (one would hope). So to get the best out of yourself you need to be 'in the moment' and relaxed in order to put that pressure to the side and not allow it to hinder your performance.

A fun example you might like to try is a concept I read about in the classic book, The Inner Game Of Music by Barry Green. If you have a particular part of a piece of music you can't seem to get right, make the mistake and watch yourself as a kind of independent observer. More often the mistake just vanishes. You turned the pressure off. And if you did make the mistake again, you just watched it happen and should have a better understanding of what you need to do to sort it out. But I've been consistently amazed over the years how often mistakes vanish when you actually aim to make them.

What all this boils down to is taking some time to examine how you feel about things and trying to dig just a little under the surface. A little introspection can pay big dividends in a practical way. Take care!

*Get more info and links to related lessons on all Justin's GT articles at www.justinguitar.com/gtmag*

BARBARA BUELEN

# MITCH DALTON

*The studio guitarist's guide to happiness and personal fulfilment, as related by our resident session ace. This month:* ***Where There's A Hit There's A Writ.***

I recall it as if it were yesterday. I descended the stairs to the subterranean Soho black hole that was Joe&Co, replete with armfuls of instruments and eternal hope of any early finish. Working for Paul Hart was always a delight. Composer, arranger, orchestrator, and multi-instrumentalist. Laid back, supportive and appreciative.

Oh, yes. One other detail.The man was a total genius, in the true sense of the word. And certainly not one of the scores of relatively talented individuals to whom the term has been mis-applied. No. This is a man who could write a commercial for a symphony orchestra morning, within two hours of receiving the brief, have it copied and prepared by lunchtime, the musicians booked and the music recorded by the end of the afternoon. Often the ad would be on screen that evening. All achieved with a minimum of fuss and an absence of artistic temperament. I was 20 minutes early for the one-hour booking, to hear "Do you fancy starting early?" Not an uncommon occurrence when working for the gentleman. I'd frequently find myself driving home before I was officially due to begin.

"This shouldn't take long. They've asked for something in the style of I Heard It Through The Grapevine. It's just you, Brett (Morgan) on drums and myself on bass guitar. I've pre-recorded the electric piano. Eight clicks in and away we go…" A minute and a half later we were listening to the playback in the control room with the exec from the ad agency. Taciturn and stony faced, he reclined upon the obligatory black leather studio sofa. After a silence longer than the time taken to record the thing, he passed judgement. "It doesn't sound like I Heard It Through The Grapevine."

There was a pause as Paul took a drag on his Benson & Hedges, reached for his pencil, scribbled a couple of alterations and with an, "Okay, try this", we returned to our travails. A minute later and we were back in the room. "It doesn't sound like I Heard It Through The Grapevine".

"Hmm. Let me explain. It doesn't sound exactly like that tune, because if it did we'd have a problem. To be precise, I'd have the problem. Not the client. Not your ad agency. Not my company. But me, personally. I'd be sued for plagiarism. Now, if you wish to record a piece that replicates Mr Gaye's iconic song, you'll need to acquire the rights from his publishers, although that it will cost you dear. But that is a decision for you."

For the third and last time, the mantra "It doesn't sound like I Heard It Through The Grapevine" rang out. For all I know, those 10 words represented the entirety of ad-man's vocabulary. At which point, The Mozart of Manuscript Paper took a valedictory puff and replied with commendable calmness. "Well, that's as far as I'm going. Effing mix it!" And with that he was through the door and into The Dog And Duck, his outsize Dr Who-style scarf flapping in the breeze behind him. I wrote my invoice and left. They didn't use our recording. In fact, they didn't use anything at all. The original strap line appeared on screen accompanied by a bold silence. The company went out of business later but I wouldn't be rash enough to suggest a direct connection.

**"AT WHICH POINT THE MOZART OF MANUSCRIPT TOOK A VALEDICTORY PUFF AND REPLIED, 'WELL THAT'S AS FAR AS I'M GOING. EFFING MIX IT!'"**

I am able to confirm from personal experience that our hero was justifiably concerned by the legal implications inherent in this sorry tale. A few years earlier I had performed on a 'library' or 'production' music album for a good friend in that particular world. This is music commissioned for media use and not for sale to the general public. The composer earns royalties only when his music is used. The library company pays the upfront costs and typically enters into an agreement for a 50/50 split on future earnings. My friend (at the time the biggest earner for one of the largest library music publishers) was briefed to write an album of movie themes in the style of yer all time favourites. Among them was an homage to Chariots Of Fire. His piece contained none of the notes relating to that particular blockbuster. However, it did evoke a similar atmosphere by dint of tempo, orchestration and overall sonic landscape.

None of which would have mattered one jot. Except that a well-known shoe manufacturer picked up his ditty for use in a campaign for children's footwear. Unfortunately, the scene featured a bunch of people running along a beach in slo-mo. No further explanation required, I trust. Within days, a representative of a certain Mr Vangelis of Greece had asked for a word with Graham. And a heart-stopping sum of money. It took a while before the publishing company settled the matter on his behalf. 'Passing off' is the legal term. And I sincerely hope that you never fall victim to such an accusation.

*For more on Mitch and his musical exploits with the Studio Kings, go to: www.mitchdalton.co.uk*

**With the recent Ed Shearan court case decided, Mitch's piece is somewhat timely**

# JAN AKKERMAN

*Guitar instrumentals have supplied some of music's most evocative moments.* ***Jason Sidwell*** *asks top guitarists for their take on this iconic movement. This month: Dutch prog band Focus's brilliant original guitarist.*

**GT: What is it about guitar instrumentals that appeals to you?**

JA: A good friend and songwriter came up with a great lyric "Words are made to lie" which is very appropriate, especially in today's politics, to mention one thing.

**GT: What can an instrumental provide a listener that a vocal song can't?**

JA: One could say the same about a film, and I like the film better, because it has both. But the mystery in music is greater and takes your spirit to different places. If you can imagine Django Reinhardt playing Montmartre, at the Hot club du France, on only acoustic guitar with Stephan Grappelli on violin. The Nazis sat down in the same place and forgot about the whole 'entartete kunst' (forbidden art). Then you've achieved something - to give you an example.

**GT: What tendencies with instrumentals do you either embrace or avoid - rhythms, harmony, playing approach, tones?**

JA: Actually none of these, otherwise I wouldn't play the guitar. For me it's a privilege to be able to incorporate all these things in a piece of music written by people who know what they're doing, and to my shame and scandal sometimes, I can't live up to the occasion. That's also the challenge to get better in the art of guitar playing and proceed to develop your own style, and not just copy second-hand blues licks (or me in some severe cases).

**GT: Is a typical song structure of verse, verse, chorus, middle eight, verse, etc, always relevant for an instrumental?**

JA: For me that's important but for others not - if you take Mahler or some free jazz guys or Zappa, if you like. For me it's good to have structure, so later on I can let go and start a whole new ball game, developing new ideas. This is how it works for me. There's so many great examples for this.

**GT: How useful is studying a vocalist's approach for guitar melodies?**

JA: The voice is the most important instrument. The words are another thing, as we all know, and that's why I play the guitar. It's God's gift when you can sing and I always listen to a voice for intonation and beauty. My own daughter Laurie sings all day and it's a delight to hear her voice. In the old days I used to listen a lot to the Welsh guards military marching band and there was a trumpet player who touched me; the clarity of tone, the timing, etc. Later I recorded a song called Sylvia and by listening to this trumpet player I knew exactly how to handle the melody line for that song. It might sound a bit odd but it's true.

**GT: How do you start writing one; is there a typical approach or inspiration for you?**

JA: I try to become quiet inside and start playing a pattern, sometimes classical, and it can develop, most of the time, into a classic rock-fusion thing and give an impression of a situation you're in. Like a motor ride through in the Ardennes, Luxembourg, Germany, Holland - it's all in front of me so to speak, inspiration enough.

> *"FOR ME IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A STRUCTURE, SO LATER ON I CAN LET GO AND START A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME, DEVELOPING NEW IDEAS"*

**GT: What do you aim for when your performance is centre stage for the entire numbrr, as it often is with an instrumental?**

JA: I'd like to take an audience on a trip and bring them home safe, as well as myself. Not winding up with scrambled legs.

**GT: Many vocal songs feature a guitar solo that begins low and slow, but then finishes high and fast. Is this approach useful for instrumental writing, in developing pace and dynamics over its duration?**

JA: In rock, rules are there to be broken. So if someone wants to start off screaming loud and finish off very mellow as an anti-climax (which is not understood by the masses)I think it's certainly just as important, as part of the performance.

**GT: What type of guitar tone do you prefer for playing instrumentals?**

JA: Sometimes the tone distracts from the music. In other words, it's not what you say, it's the way you say it!

**GT: Do you have favourite keys or tempos when writing or improvising?**

JA: The key of A seems to be my favourite, as with Hocus Pocus, and tempos come with the song or pattern - such as the bolero or any rock beat, jazz, swing or Latin.

**GT: And do you find Minor or Major keys preferable to play or write in?**

JA: I like both, and it depends on the mood what key I'll use.

**GT: Do you have any favourite modes?**

JA: You know it's all a matter of taste, just like styles etc. We live in a free world, so why restrict yourself to one particular style, key or rhythm? Music is like water - one can take the most hard-core rocker or any grumpy old man... put one toe into the water and he will become a child. Music's like water to me.

**GT: What about modulations into new keys?**

JA: I love modulations because they colourise the composition and it sets the level for improvisations, and how good you're at it.

**GT: Do you view the backing band differently than you would on a vocal song?**

JA: Certainly. Sometimes when you play with an instrumental group they have a tendency to take it easy on a [vocal] session "He or she is a great singer but what he or she sings I don't particularly like." That's not where I want to go musically with a singer.

**GT: What are your views on harmonising melodies? Some love it, others don't.**

JA: I love to rearrange melodies. That's a cool challenge, be it an old or a new one.

**GT: What three guitar instrumentals would you consider iconic, or have inspired you?**

JA: Connie Francis's Lipstick On Your Collar - with guitar solo by George Barnes. Rodrigo's Concierto De Aranjuez. And Ain't Misbehavin' by Django Reinhardt.

*For more information on Jan and his latest instrumental solo album Close Beauty, go to www.janakkerman.com*

**Jan Akkerman reclining with his gorgeous three-pickup LP Custom**

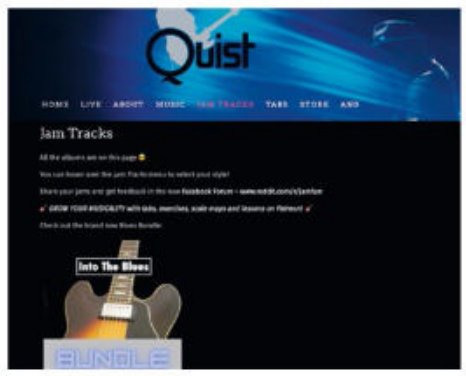
PAUL BERGEN

# JAM TRACKS TIPS

*Use these to navigate our bonus backing tracks*

**1 Slow Acoustic Blues - B Minor**
We start with a simple acoustic guitar-driven blues in B Minor, from my new jam album Into The Blues, Vol. 7. B Minor Pentatonic scale (B-D-E-F#-A) is an excellent place to start here. So have fun!

**2 Groove Jazz II-V-I - G Minor**
Here's a fun groove jam made for practising that essential building block of jazz; the II-V-I chord progression. Arpeggios are Am7♭5 (A-C-E♭-G), D7 (D-F#-A-C) and Gm7 (G-B♭-D-F).




**3 Slow Jazzy Blues - A Minor**
Here we have a slow jazz-blues in A Minor, where A Minor Pentatonic (A-C-D-E-G) and the A Minor scale itself (A-B-C-D-E-F-G) are your first good points of call. For the Dominant chord (E7), use A Harmonic Minor (A-B-C-D-E-F-G#).

**4 Dusty Groove Blues - A Minor**
We finish with a J Dilla (producer, rapper) inspired groove blues in A Minor. Use A Minor Pentatonic (A-C-D-E-G) as your starting point and focus your energy on locking into the groove. Happy jamming!

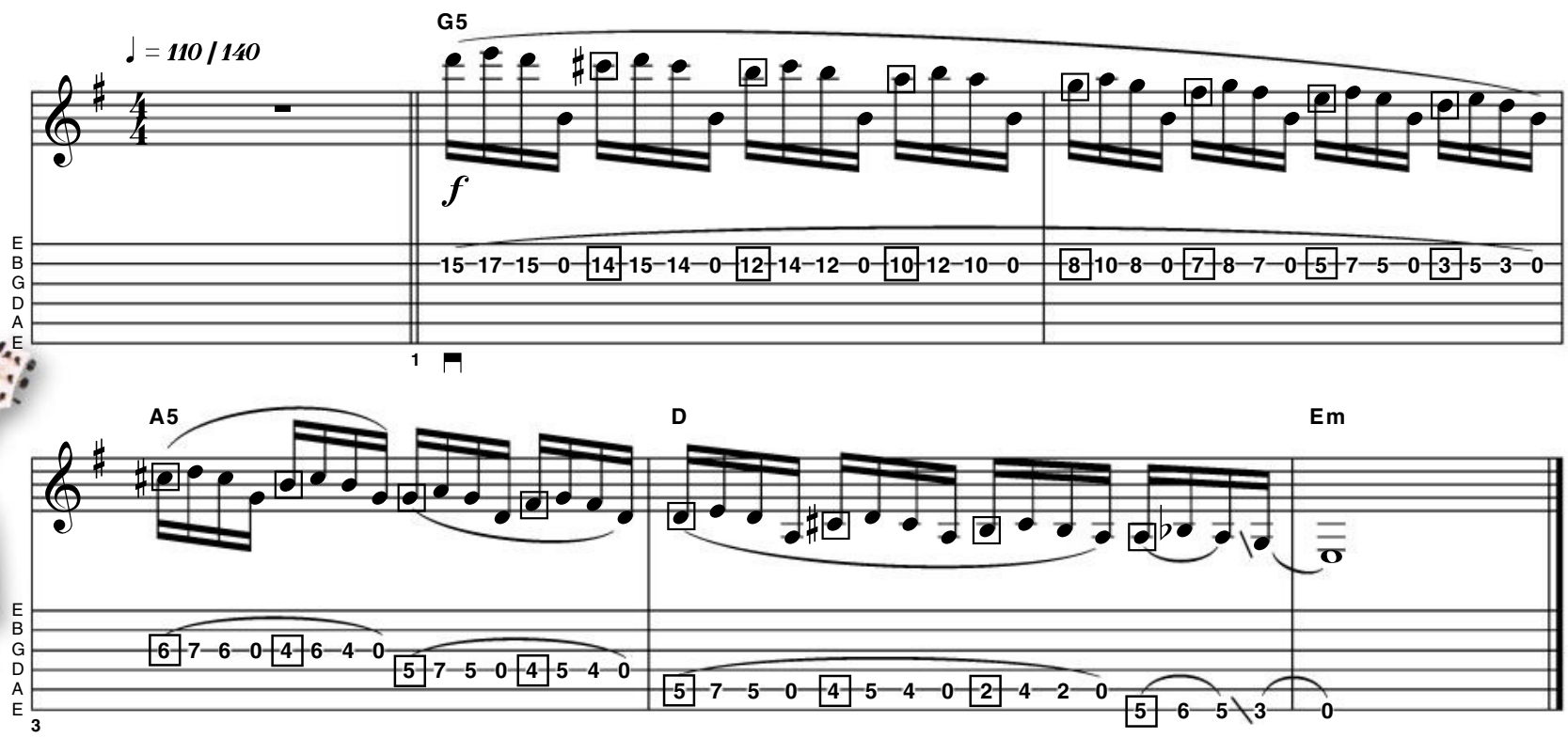
*Visit www.Quistorama.com/jamtracks and subscribe to www.youtube.com/QuistTV for more jam tracks. Quist's latest album Lofi Christmas is out now and you can find him on Spotify and Instagram, as well as Patreon for his full library of tabs and lessons.*

ROBERT KNIGHT ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

## PHIL HILBORNE'S ONE-MINUTE LICK

*One-Handed Open-String Lick*

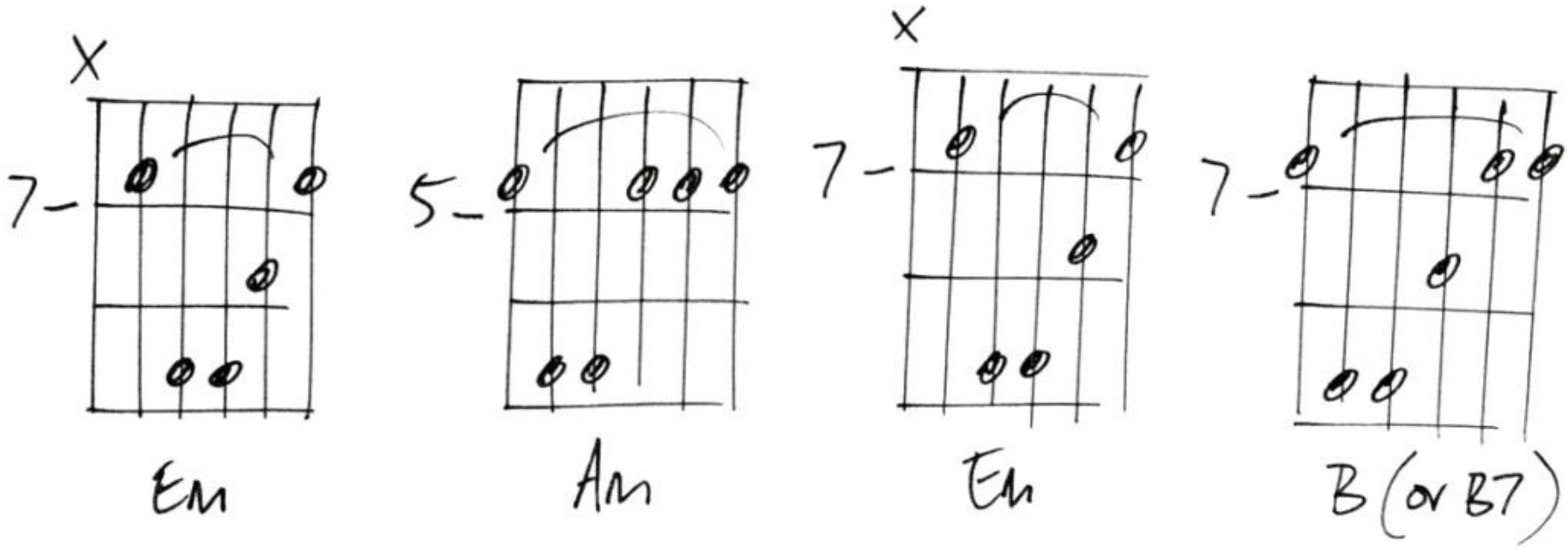
**HERE'S A DESCENDING legato idea that, aside from the initial picked note, is played using only the fretting hand. Steve Vai and many other great players use ideas like this, as they sound great and they also look very cool. You wiill need to play the first of each four-note grouping with a fretting-hand hammer-on, followed by a hammer-on and then a pull-off to the required open string. This sequence then repeats in pretty much the same way on each beat for the entire line. Handling noise needs to be taken care of here. Gently rest your fretting-hand fingers on the strings either side of the one you are playing and mute them. A little palm muting will also help to stop unwanted notes or squeaks. The entire line uses notes drawn from the E Dorian scale E-F#-G-A-B-C#-D E, but it's worth mentioning that these notes result in a G Lydian sound against the G chord, an A Mixolydian sound against the A chord and a D Major sound against the D chord. After playing through it as written, see if you can compose similar phrases of your own, preferably in a variety of keys and using different scales.**



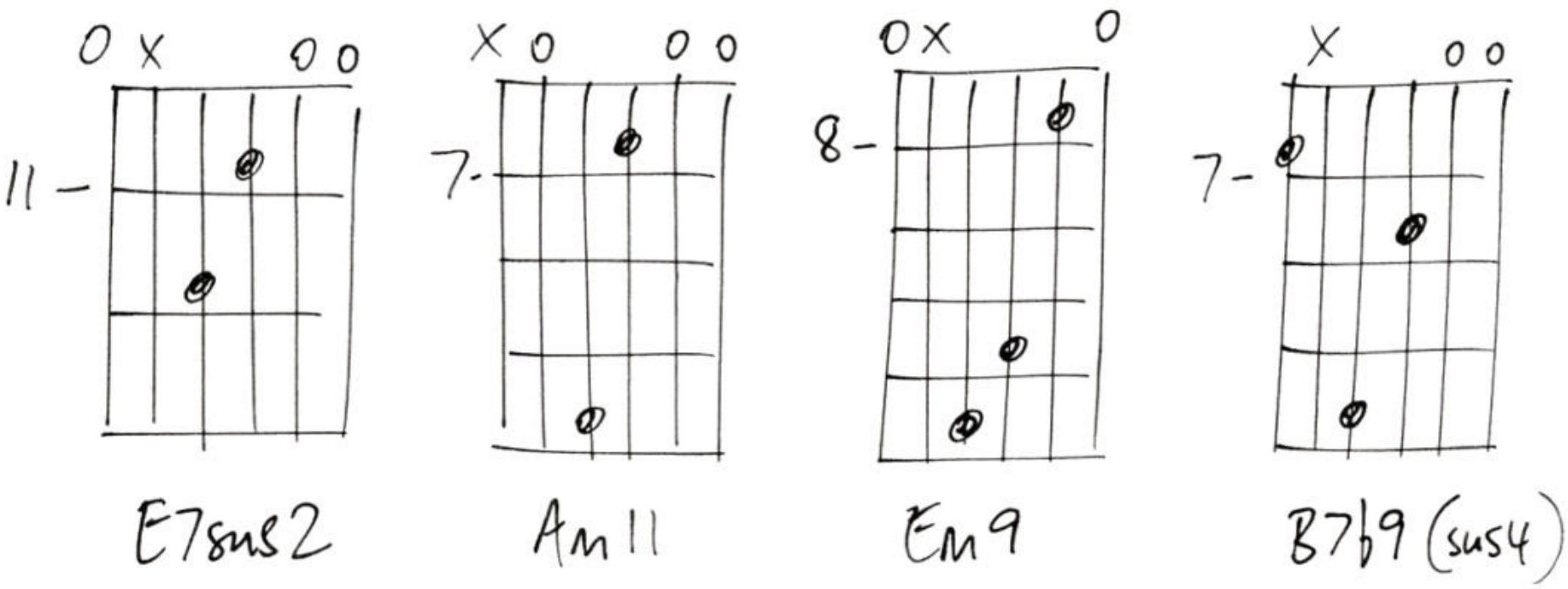
# SUBSTITUTE
## *Clusters*

WITH RICHARD BARRETT

*The term 'cluster' refers to a group of three or more adjacent notes played together. Whether it's a chord or not depends on the notes and context. So, three adjacent notes from the chromatic scale (say, C, C# and D) don't fit conventional chord theory. It's interesting, but only useful for special effects.*




**HOWEVER**, if we work from regular scales, we can create some useful sounds that do function as chords. The main problem is that the guitar isn't ideal for playing notes close together, so we have to be crafty and use open strings. This restricts the keys and scales you can use, but E Minor (E-F#-G-A-B-C-D) works very well. For the substituted example, we've simply arpeggiated the notes in ascending order, but you don't have to do that. The mixture of fretted and open notes can create some surprising melodic lines, so try using the same pattern for each chord.




**DON'T GET** too confused by the chord names – remember, this is all about clusters of consecutive scale notes. In this case, we have B-D-E-F#, allowing for a little artistic licence, because the C wouldn't really work!

**THE CLUSTER** here is B-C-D-E, which we've placed over an A bass note. It would also work over a C bass, giving us the sound of Cmaj9.

**THE ORIGINAL** progression returned to Em at this point, but rather than repeating the first shape, we'll shift the cluster up through the scale, using D-E-F#-G, which still works over the E bass note.

**THE B MAJOR** (or B7) chord in the original progression moves into the Harmonic Minor for a clearer 'turnaround'. This cluster is B-C-D#-E; try playing over the open A bass note which creates an inverted B11♭9.

# SATRIANI TRACK BY TRACK

With the release of his new studio album, The Elephants Of Mars, Joe Satriani talked with **Jason Sidwell** about creativity, technique and his use of a software plugin for his only amplifier tone.

**DO YOU FEEL rock guitar guitar instrumentals have changed due to the influence of YouTube?**
Now that new styles of music and new technologies have arrived, the change was inevitable. All for the better, I think. There are more acceptable formats and styles of arrangement now than before. Rock instruments can be the sort that focuses on demonstration of technical prowess, or, just the opposite, some kind of subtle artistic expression that doesn't want you to notice the techniques applied. This new reality allows for a greater variety of talent to have a seat at the table. On the positive side guitarists today have developed their techniques to a higher level than decades ago, but on the negative side the presence of the camera has altered how these new players are appreciated. In fact, they are not 'heard' as much as they are 'seen' and perhaps judged by that to a large degree.

**You've said The Elephants Of Mars is a new standard for instrumental guitar albums, and a new platform of your own design. Is this perhaps derived from what you're seeing on platforms like YouTube?**
I wanted to create a new standard for myself primarily. I needed to write better songs, come up with more creative arrangements, play my guitar better and make a more compelling sounding album in total. The art form of the instrumental album is unique, and I cherish it. I love achieving the perfect sequence of songs to make the album a cathartic listening experience from the first song to the last. And, to have it work its magic when it's on repeat. I guess this is because I still love listening to albums as a whole, complete artistic statement.

**What are the positives and negatives for the guitar on social media outlets?**
Young guitarists today are advancing the art of guitar playing faster and more intricately than ever before. They are accomplishing what no other generation has accomplished before. I am stunned by their technical innovations, applaud their musicianship and their new attitudes about composing for the guitar. I check in on them every day as a way to keep myself motivated to practise a little harder. Even though I know I will never catch up to them, I am grateful for their inspiration.

**From the Elephant images to track names, instrumentation and modal content, you're working in an exotic context. How explicitly should fans be aware of this?**
I am a product of humanity as a whole, not only where I was born (NY, USA). I have always loved music from around the world, and around the block! I make no distinction between the two. Sound and time, those are a musician's most basic tools. From there it's melody, harmony, and rhythm. Those elements create music to lift people up, help them celebrate, commiserate, or tell our side of the story of life. As much as I love to talk about the architecture of my songs, I just want people to take them into their hearts and make them the soundtrack to their lives. They don't need to know music theory details.

**From a harmonic perspective, what moment on the album do you feel made you flex your musical muscles most?**
Sailing The Seas Of Ganymede is perhaps the most abstract rock song I've ever recorded besides Not Of This Earth. It's such an eclectic arrangement of unexpected parts that somehow unite into a beautifully cinematic whole. The trick with instrumentals is getting the song to communicate a compelling story to the listener and avoiding it becoming didactic, methodical, or turning into a demonstration of sorts. For me, it means everything must be heartfelt and purposeful, no posing and no self-promotion, just truthful performances that support the song's meaning.

**Does modern rock still need to pay homage to the lineage of Hendrix, Cream, Led Zeppelin?**
No. There are no rules, there never were. In music there's only cause and effect. If you play a high F Natural when the band hits a big E Major chord there will be repercussions to deal with in a musical sense and with the audience. I love rock music and the whole idiom in general, but time has moved on. We live in a post hip-hop, hyper pop world right now. Rock is an established style and cultural movement that will endure, but only if it is allowed to morph and change.

**What does fusion mean to you, and do you feel what you write is fusion?**
Fusion as a musical catch phrase puts you in a space between jazz and rock, but it's a disservice to the idiom to try and categorise it. It's an aspiration and celebration of the love of all music. I understand when people get irritated if they can't figure out if what they're listening to is jazz 'or' rock, HA! That's mostly because the people making the fusion are failing at their own game. Music still has to be good to be good.

**The album cover that morphs guitar bodies with Elephants is reminiscent of Grace Jones' Slave To The Rhythm (her head becomes a shoe upside down). What inspired that?**
My good friend and owner of Meat And Potatoes, Todd Gallapo came up with that brilliant graphic design. He came up with the idea after hearing a rough mix of the title track. It fits perfectly with the story of the elephants and their quest to liberate a newly terraformed Mars from the evil corporations of Earth (a sci-fi story by me and Ned Evett). The album's LP and CD packages are awesome! Big thanks to earMUSIC for letting us make those packages for our fans.

**Can you explain the working relationship you have with (producer/engineer) Eric Caudieux?**
Eric and I have collaborated on quite a few studio and live albums since '97. He came on as an editor for the first G3 Live DVD, then we did the Engines Of Creation album, then he joined the live band on keyboards and guitar, etc. He is credited as the producer on this new album, but he contributed as a co-writer on three songs as well. I've always loved working with Eric for his creativity and knowledge of music. He's an ace editor and engineer as well. He plays a lot of keys on the new album and helped Greg Koller mix the entire project.

**You used a SansAmp Plugin exclusively for your amp tones on The Elephants Of Mars, even over your signature amps and Amplitube plugin. Please elaborate...**
I record all my guitars direct, that has been my standard for years now. Even when I'm all set up live in the studio, we always have a DI line in place just in case we want to 're-amp' the signal later. This was how I approached the guitars this time too, but in the end the Avid Sans-Amp plugin returned the most compelling version of my playing. You could actually hear the difference in the intimacy of my performance so much more with the plugin compared to the re-amped tracks. We tried Marshalls, 5150s, Fenders, etc. Nothing compared to the plugin, even the modelling suites we had. It surprised me to no end, but there it was. Greg Koller ran my SansAmp track out through some great, real world outboard limiters, compressors, and EQs as well. He has a wonderful set of ears, and he knows how to mix guitars!

## ELEPHANTS... TRACK BY TRACK

**The instrumentation of Blue Foot Groovy is very different to the electro club feel of The Elephants Of Mars. How do you decide on a song's essence and how soon is it locked down?**
Good question. We never really know until we start to hear everyone's performance finally come together. As an example: Rai's organ was an afterthought, but it transformed the track once we heard it. I think he was channelling the great Jon Lord.

**How did you achieve the breakdown section in The Elephants Of Mars?**
That was a very clean blues solo I had recorded for the demo with only four chords moving around beneath it, with a four on the floor beat going. Eric re-composed the chords under the solo using bells and who knows what else! Then he cut the time in half to make it feel like a breakdown. The solo was left intact but re-imagined with different chords.

**Tension And Release has a great Zeppelin vibe. What inspired the riffs and the solos?**
I pulled out my JS seven-string prototype after it had been in its case for several years. The strings were old, loose, and dirty but the sound they created was intriguing to me and I found myself writing and recording the song immediately. I played-up on the wobbly nature of the old strings and dreamt up a story of emotional tension and release, just a typical thing everyone can relate to. I was thinking of Page's Achilles Last Stand when recording the Minor key solo sections. Jimmy Page is a god!

**Sailing The Seas Of Ganymede is perhaps the broadest track. How did it come about?**
That track took a lot of work, expansion, contraction, and a few surprises along the way. The idea came from playing the Jimmy Fallon Show a few times and seeing Questlove crammed into this little rehearsal booth for the pre-show run through. I wrote the song trying to imagine him in a setting more befitting to his immense talent and good nature. So, I put him on a large ship with a vast ocean to explore. I put him on Ganymede to make things more sci-fi and unpredictable. Rai takes the first solo, in the wrong spot, but we left it because it's so exciting. He starts it off imitating me! He has a good sense of humour to go with those big keyboard chops.

**E 104th St NYC 1973 is a glistening jazz-rock track with a Miles Davis vibe...**
That address in NYC between 1st and 2nd Ave is where my father was born and raised. I spent many Sundays there visiting my relatives and having fun in the city. As the '70s rolled in, NYC became a very depressed city with a myriad of social problems, but it provided so much music and art. It was also when I became of age and started playing guitar, going to concerts and hanging out with friends all over the city. So, the song represents all those memories rolled into one free-form, wah-wah, chill-out improv!

**Pumpin' has a great groove. How did the track come together?**
I recorded it with sequenced parts then asked Bryan and Kenny if they could find a way to make the bass and drums sound human, ha! I sent Eric a few clean guitar performances, some bar scooped chords, some arpeggiated and some played straight. He came up with an arrangement using a bit of each.

**Dance Of The Spores; is there enough waltz time (3/4) in rock music?**
I love a 3/4 waltz, although today we play it differently than the masters of the classical era. Still, it is a wonderfully appealing feel for storytelling. The idea for the song came from the realisation that while we humans are caught up on our everyday problems, the spores of the world are rejoicing their lives unfettered by our human issues. They have no cares other than to reproduce and grow! The verse is deceptively menacing before getting to the romantic sounding choruses. I composed the chromatic tinged breakdown section with pizzicato strings which I knew Eric would want to replace, but when he came back with Hungarian voices and Mexican horns it put a big smile on my face! It's really great when you get results like this.

*"I like to practise scales and fingerings against backing tracks, as it keeps me focused on the goal of using the new techniques for musical purposes"*

**The power orchestral vibe for Through A Mother's Day Darkly is a new zone for you - are you inspired by classical and cinematic music?**
I write with a big picture in mind. I guess I'm always thinking cinematically, making a movie for every song's story or message. This song was a one-take, seven-string, stream of consciousness, wrestled to the ground with the intent of making a new instrumental guitar song template. It grew from one guitar to adding the band, then more guitar overdubs, then the orchestra, then adding Ned's voice. Months of working on it really paid off.

**Desolation is the closing ballad with an emotive orchestra and your guitar sounding so fat and often at the point of feedback.**
That was one take on a very emotional day. I was toggling back and forth with the Sustainiac pickup switches on my JS1CR to get some notes to feed back in different ways at different times. That's my guitar into a Millenia Media HV-37 mic pre, into Pro Tools with the SansAmp plugin. Eric improvised that orchestra composition on keys. It was actually the last part of a three-part song that was over 20 minutes long! I decided to leave off the first two parts Eric and I had written and concentrate on the last movement. As I recorded my performance, I was thinking of a deathbed scene, and the thoughts racing through the minds of both the person dying and the person being left behind. Sadness, joy, regret, resignation. It was by far the most difficult subject to handle musically.

## VOCABULARY AND CHOPS

**How do you cultivate freshness in your blues licks which may nod to Clapton, Page and co, but sound specifically 'Satriani'? Any tips?**
Learn all your favourite licks from your favourite blues artists then turn around and make them your own by having a new song/story to use them on. I can't stress enough how important it is to have a well composed song to play over. A really good song will make those licks sound like they belong to you.

**How do you maintain your technique and how do you explore new possibilities?**
Practice, practice, and more practice. I need to work on my technique every day. I use the time to explore new fingerings and scale combinations. Making variety a cornerstone of my routine helps to keep things fresh and protects against repetitive stress injury. I like to practise scales and fingerings against backing tracks, as it keeps me focused on the goal of using the new techniques for musical purposes, rather than some practice aesthetic.

**And how does one avoid strain or RSI?**
Practise for shorter intervals, multiple times instead of long, marathon sessions. Change up what you work on every day, and learn to circle back on skills you want to accomplish.

**Lastly, I've asked some top guitarists why they rate you, and asked for their favourite track. What do you feel defines your originality?**
I'm too embarrassed to answer this question seriously. I can't help but be different because I've never been able to 'fit in'! At some point I realised that it was okay to be myself and made sure I applied that to everything I did, including my composing and performing. Originality may come at a price but if I ever get there, I'll be willing to pay up in full.

*Joe's new album The Elephants Of Mars is released by earMusic on April 8th. https://ear-music.shop and www.satriani.com*

ON VIDEO

# VIVA SATRIANI!

To coincide with this issue's Joe Satriani interview, **Jamie Humphries** guides us through four mini pieces that focus on different stylistic, harmonic, and technical approaches heard in many of Satch's classic tracks new and old.

**ABILITY RATING** Advanced ★★★★★

**Info** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul
**Key** Various **Tempo** Various

**Will improve your...**
✔ Legato technique
✔ Whammy bar technique
✔ Playing through key changes

When it comes to instrumental rock guitar, Joe Satriani is one of the best loved and most revered of all. Unlike many guitarists to emerge from the 'golden era' of shred, with Joe it was always and remains melody first, as he crafted album after album of hook-ladened instrumentals. That's not to say he can't and doesn't shred; when needed he can rip with the best, unleashing his terrific arsenal of legato, pick tapping and whammy bar licks. In reality he's one of the most accomplished guitarists of the last four decades, as well as being a master of theory, with a deep knowledge of composition, harmony, scales and modes. But again it's how he applies them; his music never sounds like an exercise or a study. It's always about the song, and is why Satriani remains one of the most commercially successful instrumental guitarists ever, with an array of gold and platinum albums and sales of more than 10 million copies worldwide. Not to mention 15 Grammy nominations. Joe has toured and recorded with the likes of Mick Jagger, Deep Purple and Alice Cooper, and been a part of supergroup Chickenfoot with members of Van Halen and The Red Hot Chili Peppers. He was also the mastermind behind the G3 tours, which included heavyweights like Steve Vai, Eric Johnson, Steve Morse, Phil Collen and John Petrucci.

Joe began playing guitar on 18th September 1970, the day Jimi Hendrix passed away. From that point he dedicated his life to studying and mastering the guitar. At a young age Joe was already a renowned teacher, famously instructing Steve Vai, Kirk Hammett, Larry Lalonde, Charlie Hunter, David Bryson, Alex Skolnick, and Geoff Tyson - Vai turned up with a stringless guitar and a pack of strings. So Joe's wisdom has been passed directly on to some of the world's most iconic guitarists, and indirectly onto us.

*"1987's Surfing With The Alien was a huge commercial success, from which came three charting singles"*

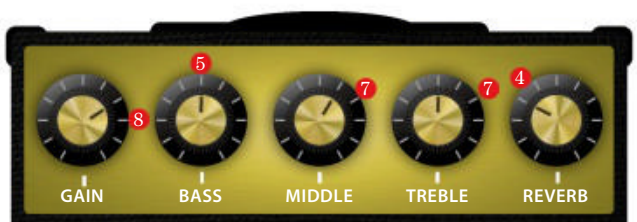
From his self-financed debut album, Not Of This Earth, in 1986, Satriani can boast a catalogue of ever-evolving releases. 1987's Surfing With The Alien was a huge commercial success, from which came three charting singles: Satch Boogie, Always With Me, Always With You, and the title track itself - an achievement not seen since Hank Marvin and The Shadows.

Joe Satriani has always evolved, but also remained faithful to his vision of who he is as an artist. This was apparent with his 1992 album The Extremist. Released when alternative and grunge music were the rage, and while many of the '80s bands' popularity was waning, it was his biggest-selling album to date. Its organic, live feel marked a departure from the synthetic drums and processed guitars of previous albums, but again Joe stayed true to his ethos, with a collection of outstanding instrumentals including the hit single, Summer Song.

Joe Satriani retains a core guitar, bass, drums and keys format, but also loves to experiment with advanced production ideas, as was apparent on 1998's Crystal Planet, 2000's Engines Of Creation, and 2020's Shapeshifting. And with the release of new album Elephants Of Mars, we look forward to the next chapter in a remarkable career. GT

## SOME OF SATRIANI'S TECHNIQUES

SATRIANI IS comfortable playing blues, melodic ballads or hard rock, which he does with authenticity and conviction. Wearing his Hendrix influence proudly, Joe demonstrates his bluesy side on tracks like New Blues, House Full Of Bullets, and even Satch Boogie, all of which have a very different sound but highlight Joe's Pentatonic phrasing and soulful bends. Legato plays a huge part in Joe's style, as he traverses the neck with fluid three-notes-per-string phrasing. But as well as longer flowing lines he also executes legato in 'stuttering' bursts, as heard on Flying In A Blue Dream. Joe has put his own twist on the tapping technique. Avoiding the obvious Van Halen clichés, he often utilises the edge of the pick to execute lines, either for the fast trill effect in Surfing With The Alien, or as a way of embellishing legato lines. He also loves open-string pull-offs and positions shifts, both of which can be heard on Always With Me, Always With You and Satch Boogie, the latter employing modal interchange where Joe seamlessly implies different modal qualities while maintaining a constant tapping figure. He also applies multi-finger tapping to chords: while forming a chord he will add higher extensions using two fingers of his picking hand. Of course he also loves the whammy bar, which he uses for a multitude of applications, from melodic articulation to crazy sound effects. He applies the bar to melodies or chords, 'scooping' into either by slightly dipping the bar prior to picking, or for subtle or extreme vibrato. Joe has plenty of extreme techniques up his sleeve, too, one of his favourites being to add screaming harmonics, either natural or pinched, using the bar to raise them in pitch. Joe will often pinch harmonics over the pickups on open strings, and raise the bar with his fretting hand. Not only does this look cool on stage, it also has a very different sound to natural harmonics. As well as dive bombs, rhythmic bouncing on the bar, and gargle techniques, another favourite that can be heard on Ice 9, is the Lizard Down The Throat' technique. Joe will fret and slide around the fretboard (often ascending), while simultaneously moving the whammy bar (often depressing it) to keep the same note at approximately the same pitch = a gargling, warbily sound! As well as these technical elements Joe is well versed in scales and modes. Some great examples include The Enigmatic, where Joe harmonised the Enigmatic scale to produce a series of chords that produce a very angular sounding composition. Time and Flying In A Blue Dream are excellent examples of how Joe modulates to different modes, often employing the same mode but in different keys, as a way of producing dramatic and exciting progressions as a foundation for a composition.




### Get the Tone

Joe mainly plays his own Ibanez JS signature series, and has used Marshall, Laney and Peavey amps, plus delay, modulation, wah, whammy, and Boss SD-1 or DS-1. I used an Ibanez JS2410 kindly loaned by Ibanez Scandinavia, into IK Multimedia Amplitube 5, Joe Satriani amp collection. Don't be afraid of gain, but cool off some of the low end and push the mids and highs for definition. A splash of delay will help achieve Joe's iconic tone.

Satriani takes a solo wearing his classic shades and black T-shirt

LAWRENCE HARVEY

**TRACK RECORD** With such a vast output of material we could simply list *all* of Joe's albums here as essential listening. But here are few standouts: Not Of This Earth, Surfing With The Alien, Flying In A Blue Dream, The Crystal Planet, Joe Satriani, Time Machine Vol.1, Strange Beautiful Music, Black Swans And Wormhole Wizards, What Happens Next, Shapeshifting, The Elephants Of Mars. Top pick: The Extremist.

## PIECE 1 BALLAD STYLE

**[Bars 1-2 ]** Things kick off with out open-chord arpeggio figure, using a familiar chord voicing for JS fans. This intro demonstrates how Joe employs chord extensions; this one is based around the Badd11 chord. Pay attention to picking hand accuracy and the wide stretch, as well as the 6/8 time signature.

**[Bars 3-6]** The melody negotiates its way through B Major, G Lydian, and E Aeolian. I have tried to highlight the chord tones, so that the melody feels natural, and flows through the chords. Pay attention to dynamics and feel.

**[Bars 7-10]** We change key again, to A Mixolydian, resolving to B Major for the modes of G# Aeolian and E Lydian, performed over their respective chords. It's important that this run is in time to target the final note before the key change.

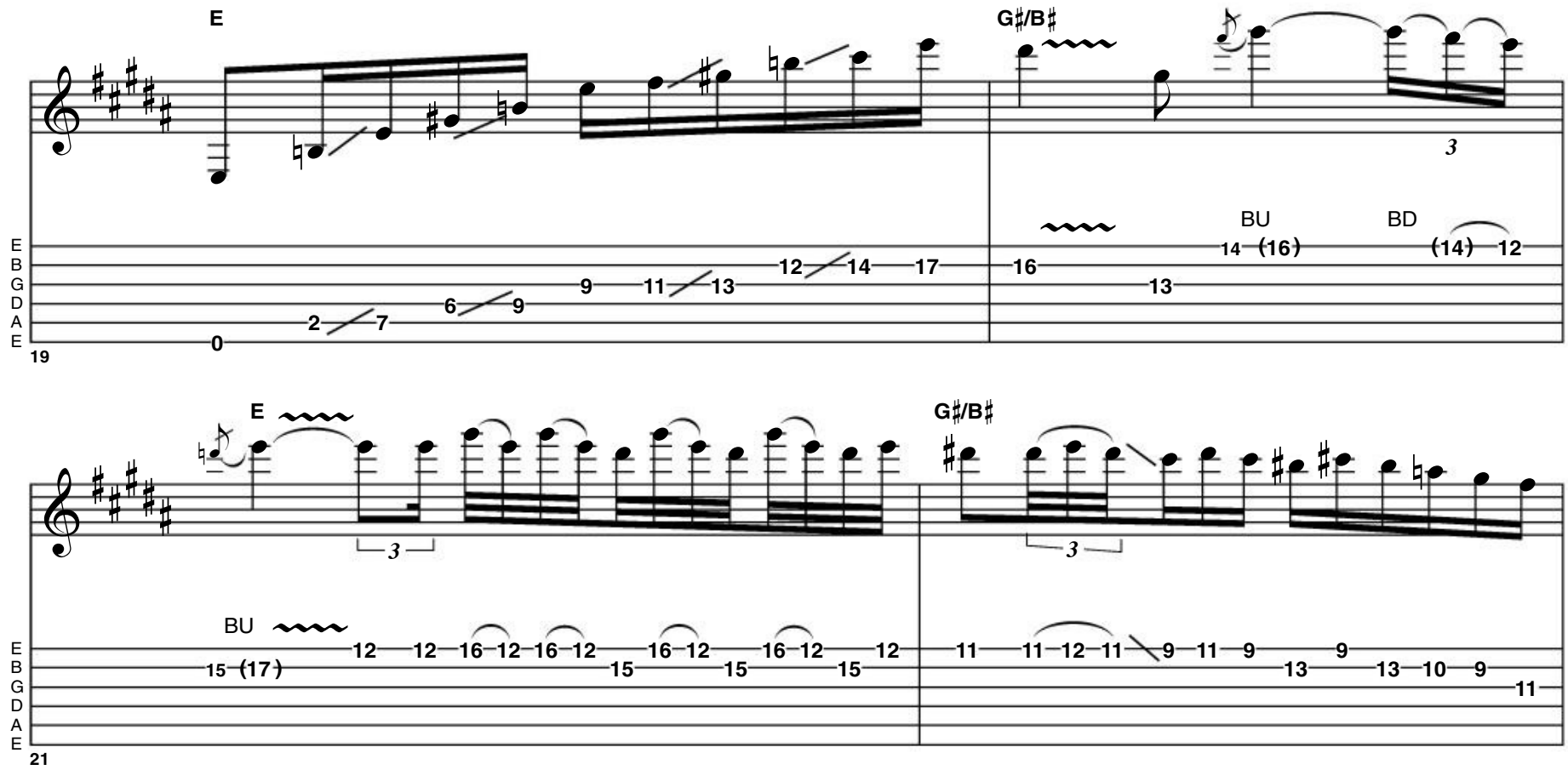
**[Bars 10-18]** Here we see a more organic band feel and a shift in guitar tone from the processed Rockman sound to traditional amp tone. The melody follows the changes using target notes for power and drama. We also see examples of Joe's Pentatonic blues style creeping in. Pay attention to the timing, and string bending accuracy.

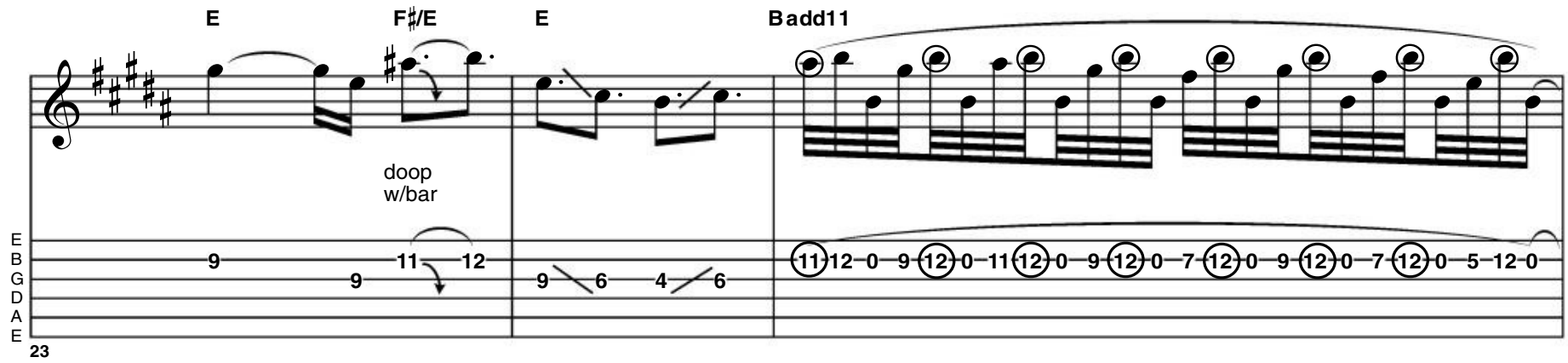
## PIECE 1 **BALLAD STYLE** ...CONTINUED

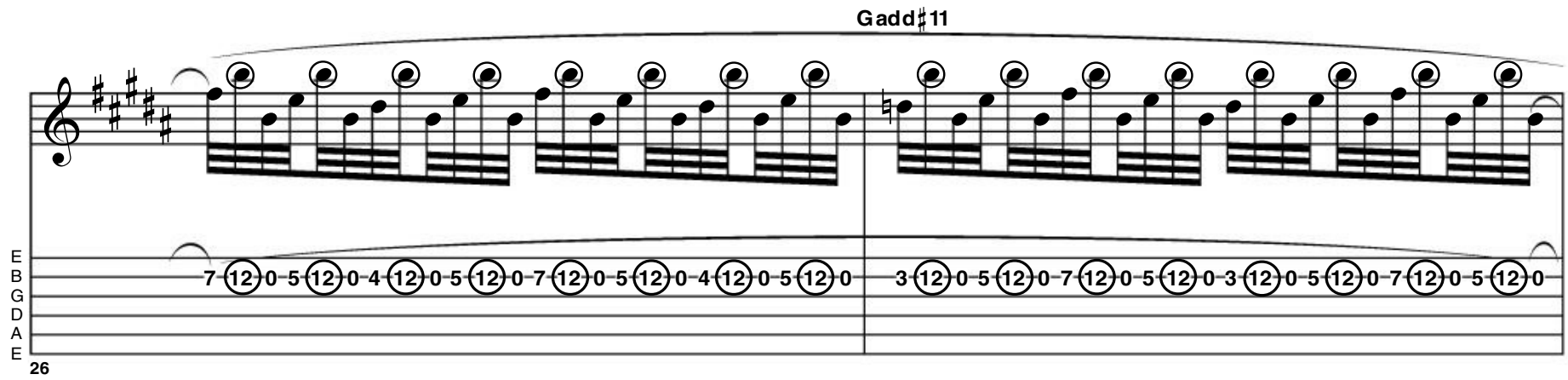
**[Bars 19- 22]** Yet another harmonic shift, with E Major implying E Mixolydian, to G# Major implying G# Phrygian Dominant. This is a great example of how Joe uses modal interchange. Although E Major is not found in C# Harmonic Minor, the III chord of this key is E Augmented, so we are simply raising the 5th (from B to B#). The shift harmonically is minimal, but very dramatic when building melodies. This section again demonstrates how Joe negotiates changes, kicking off with an epic position shifting lick that highlights the key change with the final target notes. This section also concludes with some signature Phrygian Dominant style phrasing.

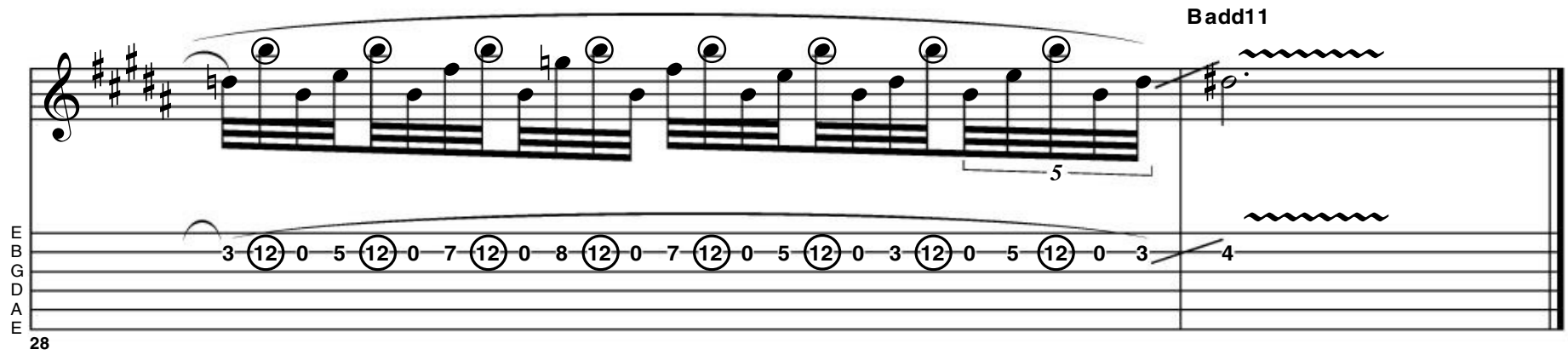
**[Bars 23-24]** And yet another key change, this time with the E Major chord functioning as the IV chord of B Major, which achieves a Lydian tonality. Look out for the whammy bar scoops and position shifts here.

**[Bars 25-29]** In this section we conclude our piece by resolving back to the opening chords. We also introduce a classic Satch tapping style lick, utilising the open second string and various position shifts. Once again we are changing key and modes, modulating from B Major to G Lydian. Pay attention to your timing for this section, making sure you keep your picking and fretting hands synchronised.



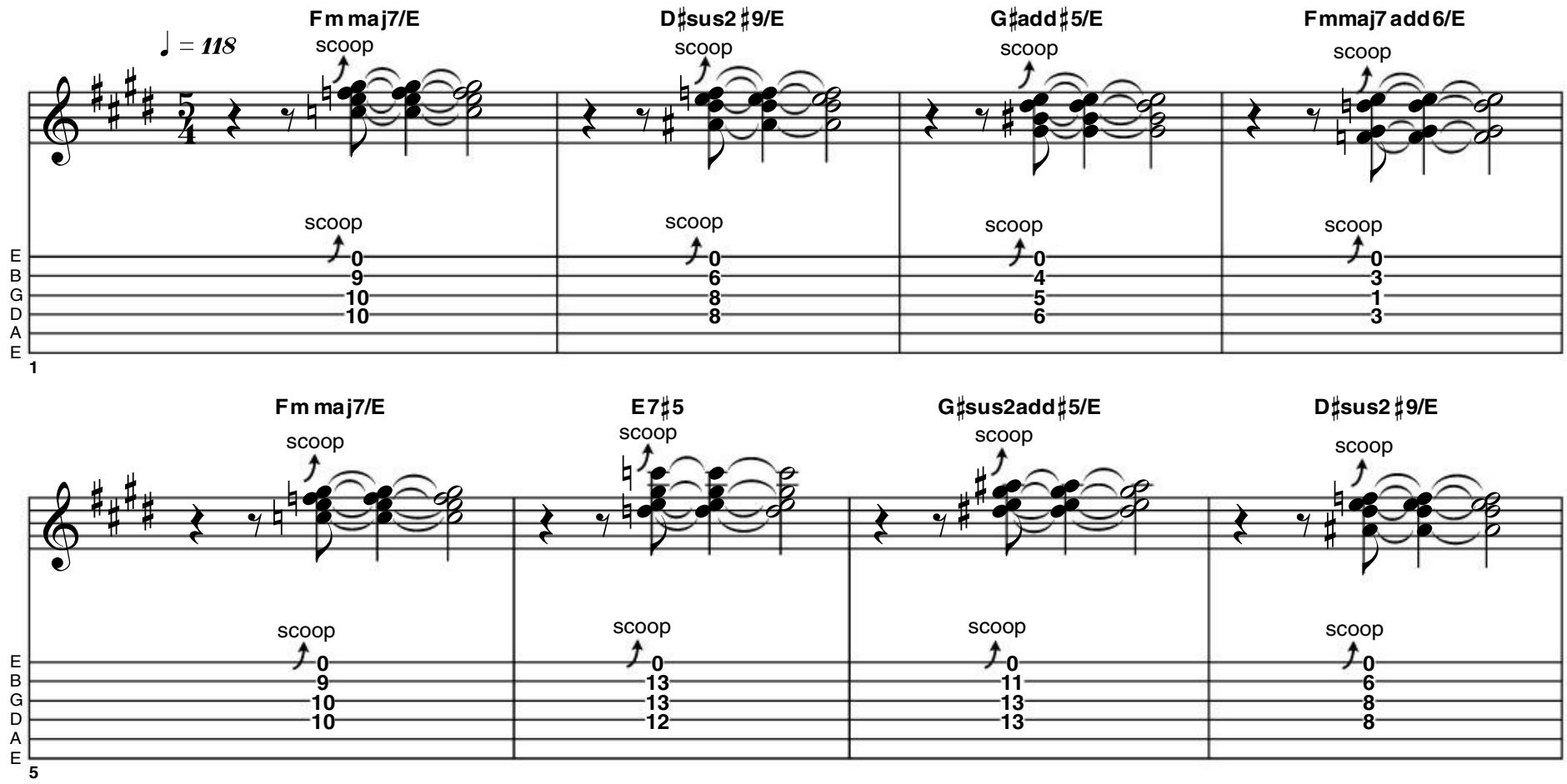



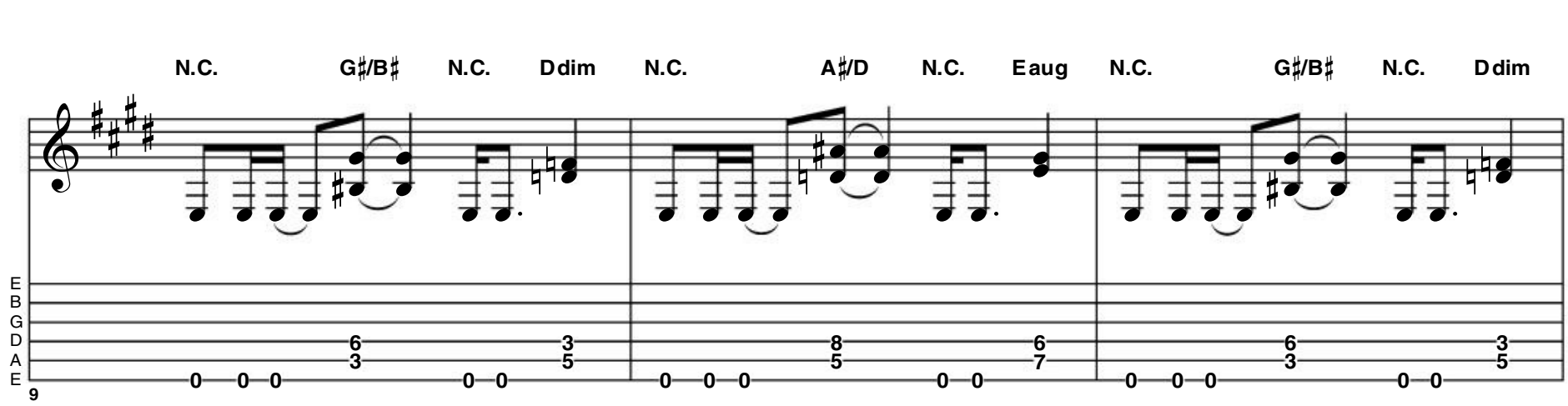



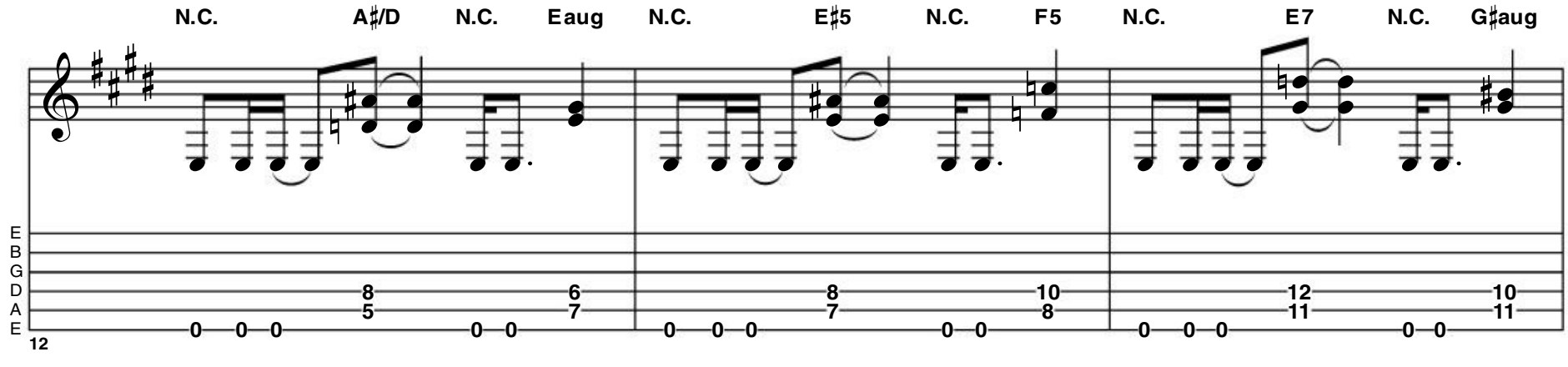
## PIECE 2 ODD TIMES, SCALES AND MODES

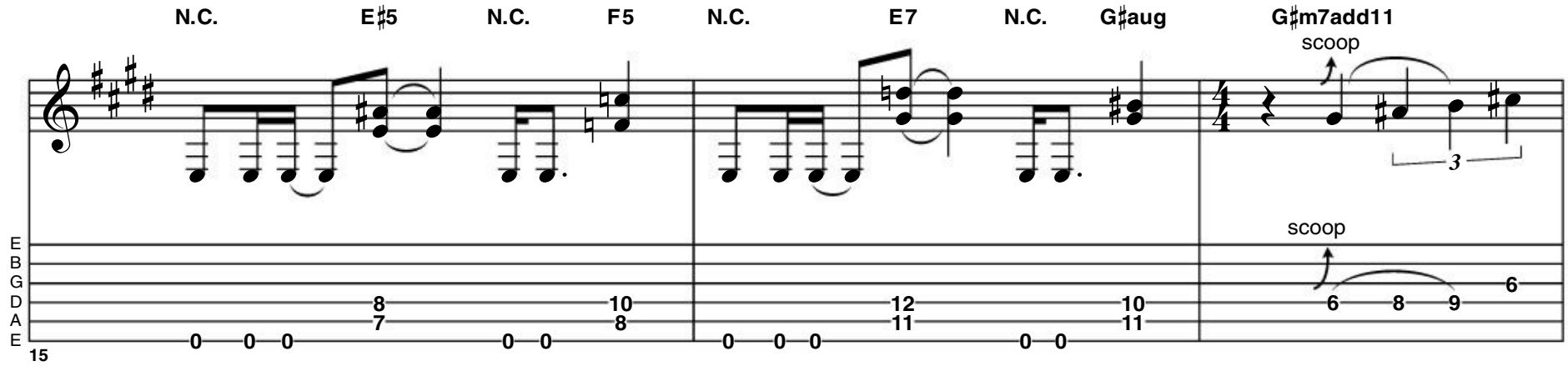
**[Bars 1-8]** This is a pretty unsettling chord progression. When composing this, I took the notes of the E Enigmatic scale and harmonised them to see what chords were available. I have kept the open top E note throughout, which adds the desired dissonance over certain chords. Also, each chord is 'scooped' in by depressing the whammy bar before picking, then letting it return. Watch for the unusual 5/4 groove.

**[Bars 9-16]** These bars introduce the second part of our riff and see a change in feel to the track. In contrast to the lush open clean chorus chords of the beginning of the piece, this new section employs a distorted Rockman tone and tighter, two-note diad (double-stop) chord voicings. Pay attention to the tight picked open sixth string that is used as a constant pedal tone over the shifting chords.



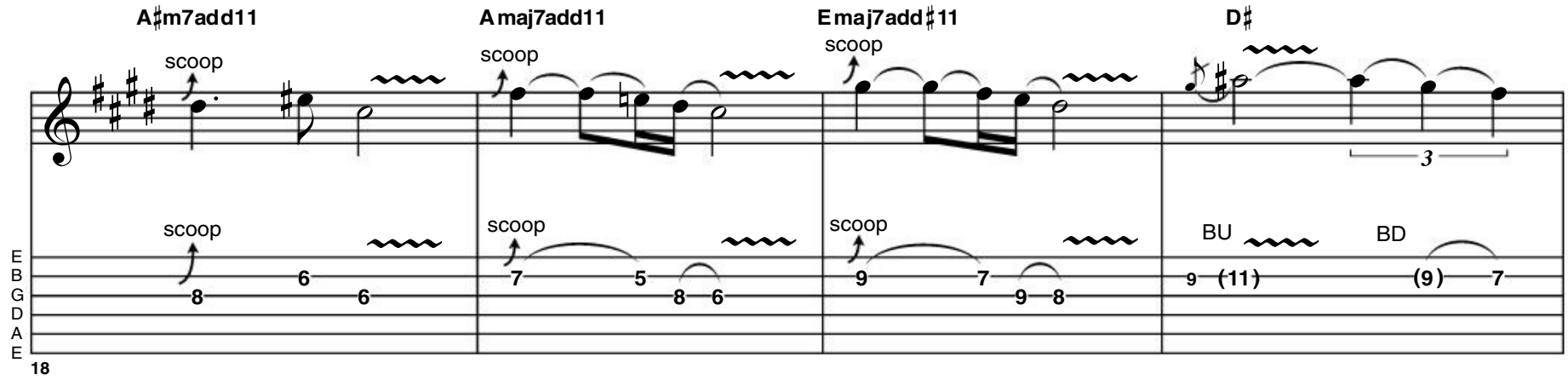



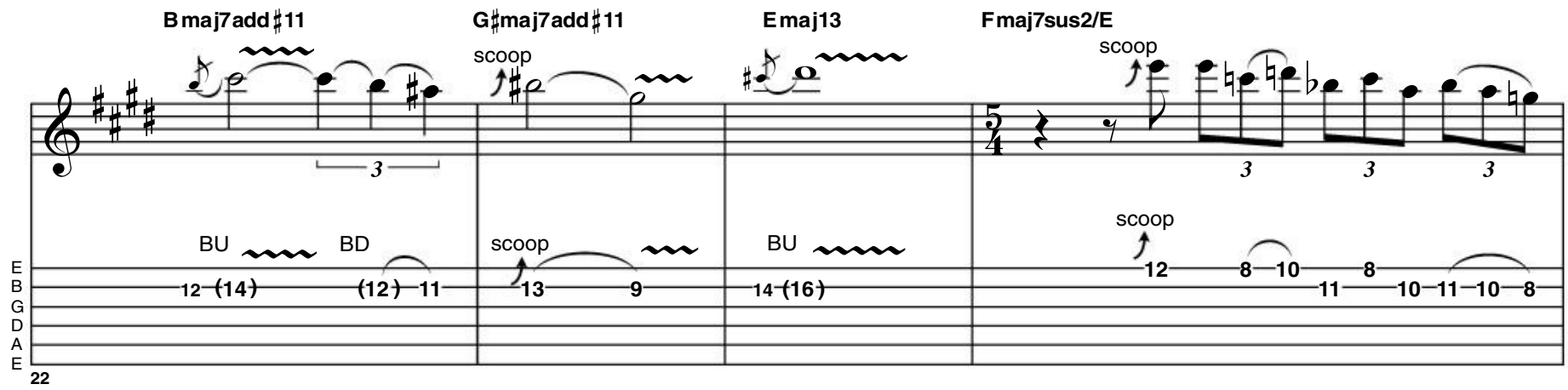



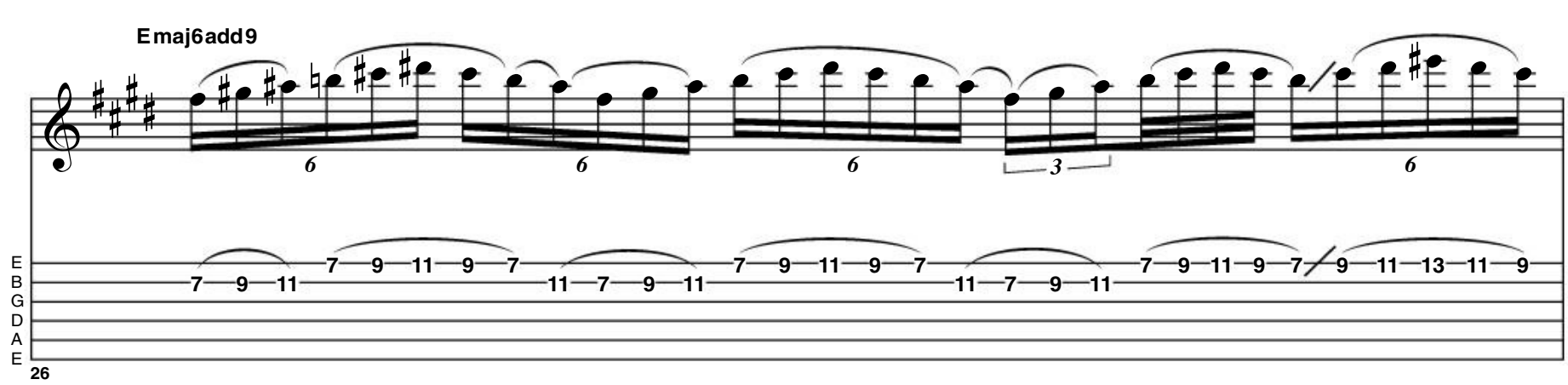
## PIECE 2 **ODD TIMES, SCALES AND MODES** ...CONTINUED

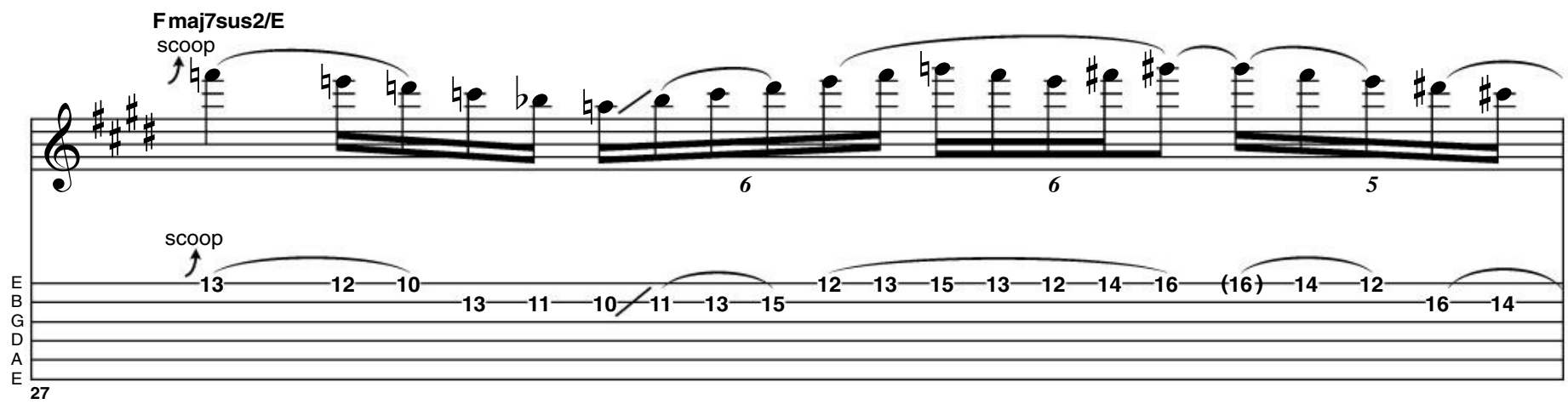
**[Bars 17-24]** For this dramatic change in feel the piece moves into less dissonant harmonic territory, as well as shifting to a 4/4 time signature. This section features key changes on every chord! Yes we really embrace Joe's ability to shift keys seamlessly and musically, without it sounding obvious. The chord progression shifts between Minor7add11 and Major7add#11 chords, so harmonically we are outlining Aeolian and Lydian modes throughout. Even though the changes are complex, the melody is very straightforward, flowing through the changes and targeting specific intervals and chord tones.

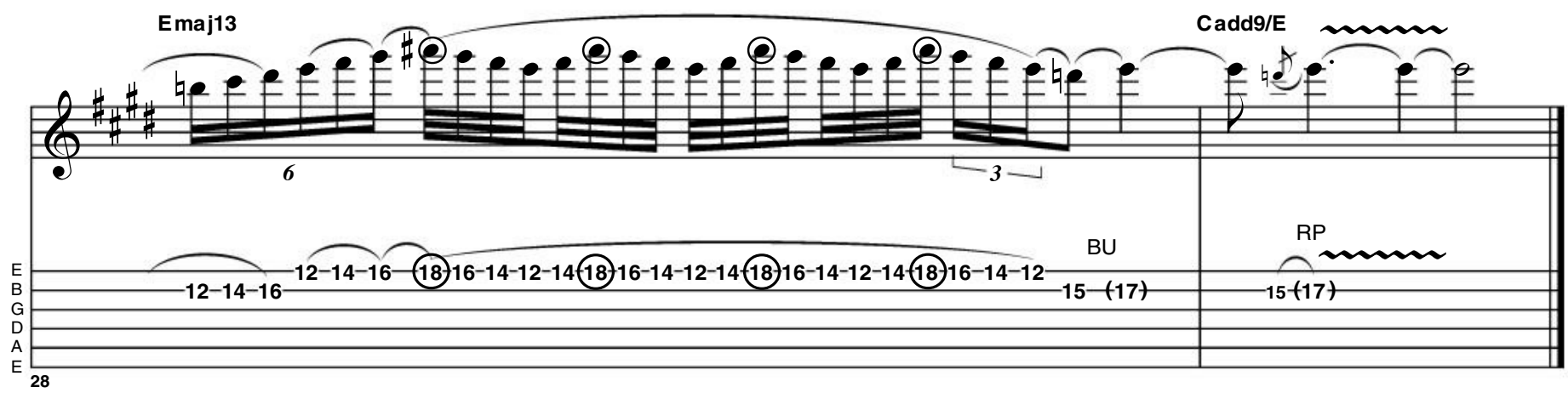
**[Bars 25-29]** For the conclusion we shift back to 5/4 signature. This is really 'out there' style Satch, harking back to his earlier, more experimental pieces. This section shifts through E Locrian, E Lydian, and finally E Aeolian. There's also plenty of legato phrasing that seamlessly negotiates the changes in typical Satch style. Pay attention to the position shifts, whammy bar phrasing, and keep the fretting hand relaxed.



## PIECE 3 BLUES STYLE

**[Bars 1-4]** For this Phrygian melody, the bass implies the harmony and changes as it shifts. The guitar plays the hypnotic figure that introduces the swung 16th-note feel.
**[Bars 5-8]** This is the main riff, a kind of blues on steroids and very much in keeping with how Joe adds a twist to classic styles. This riff is based around F# Phrygian Dominant - an unusual scale choice for a 12-bar blues riff, but illustrates how Joe takes conventional ideas and makes them his own. Pay attention to the swung groove, and really aim to sit 'in the pocket' with the bass and drums.
**[Bars 9-12]** Our next riff features a classic Satch chord tapping idea. Perform the lower part by hammering on with your fretting hand, and tapping with the first and second fingers of your picking hand to add the top harmony. Watch out for the timing here; keep both hands synchronised, and mute unwanted open strings.
**[Bars 13-23]** This melody shows how Joe develops simple motifs with minimal fuss. We are outlining the 12-bar progression using F# Minor Pentatonic and Blues scales, although we include the D# notes, over the B7 section of the riff, and this Major 3rd, brings a Mixolydian tonality. At bar 20 is a short lick based around the E Half-Whole Diminished scale. Joe uses this but not in the traditional jazz sense but more of a harmonic vehicle to an outside tonalities to his blues phrasing. Look out for the subtle slides and quarter-tone bends during this section, and again lay back in the groove.

## PIECE 3 **BLUES STYLE** ...CONTINUED

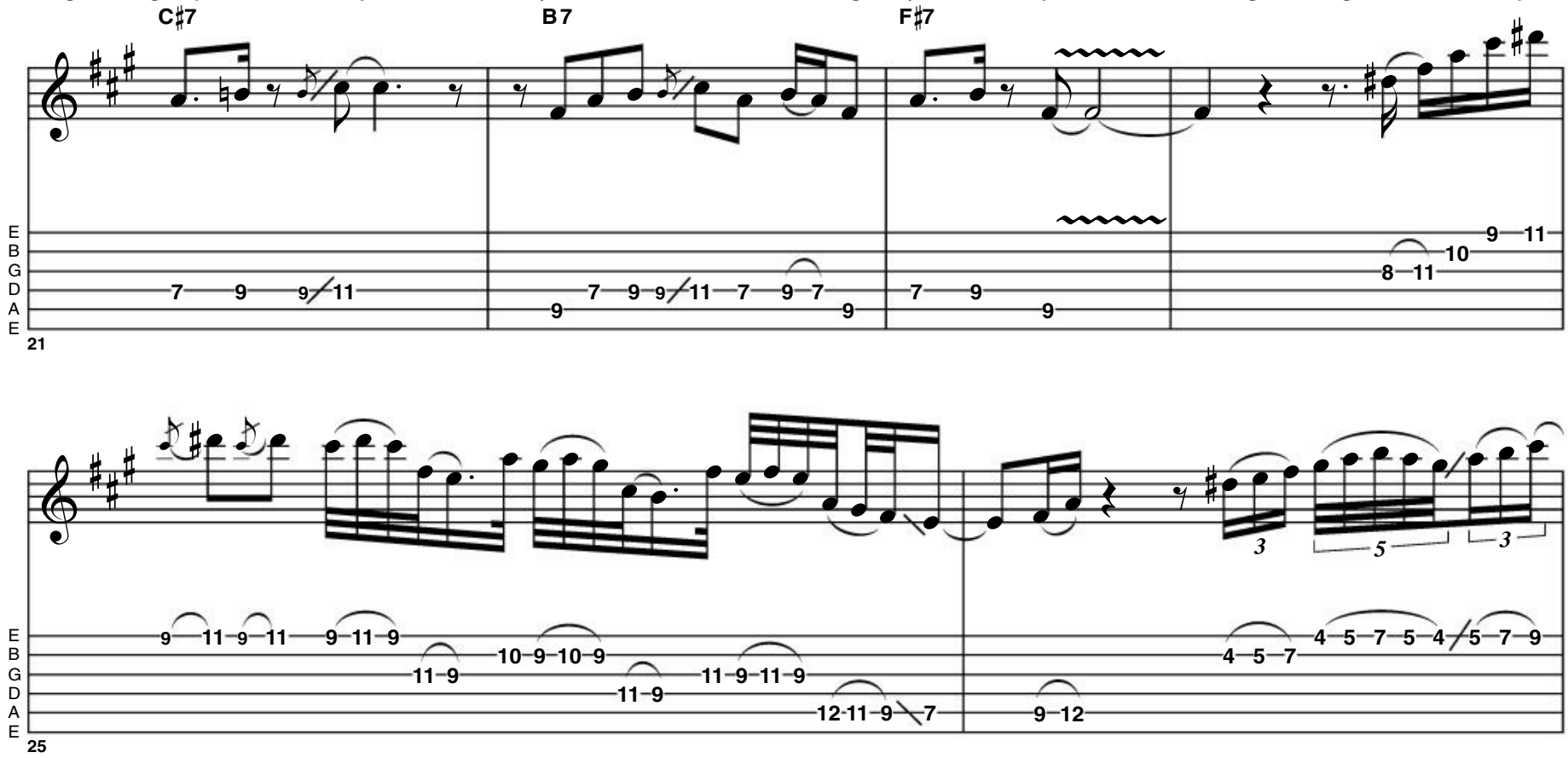
**[Bars 24-25]** Here's our solo, and we enter with a D#m7♭5 arpeggio that results in a strong Dorian tonality over the F#. The next lick features some depending legato flurries, and string skipping, so stay relaxed and pay attention to the rhythmic construction of the lick, since this solo is very much about the groove.

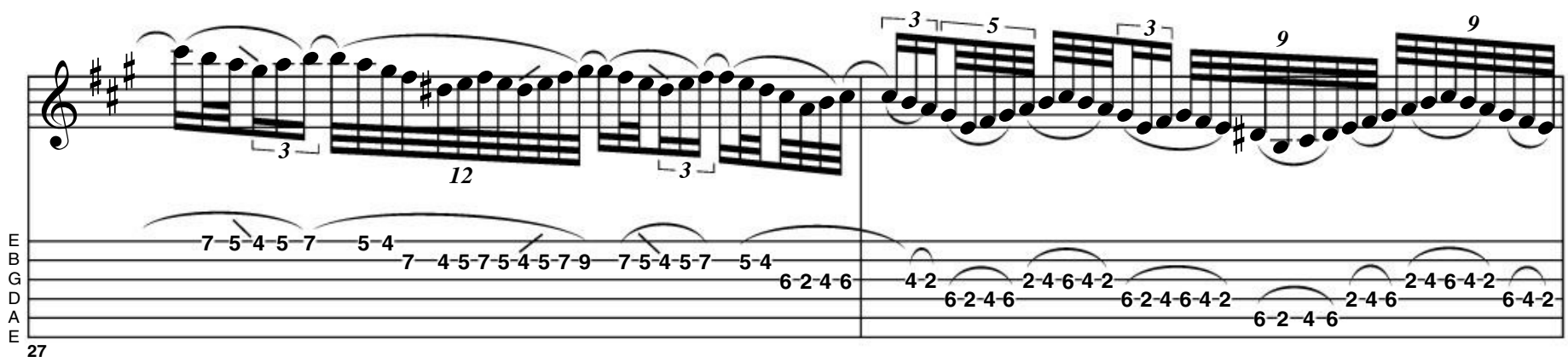
**[Bars 26-28]** Here we encounter plenty of classic Satch legato, based around three-notes-per-string fingerings in F# Dorian. The legato kicks off with stuttering flurries, with certain notes being held to break up the lines, before launching into full-on fast legato phrasing runs. The rhythmic groupings of this section are tricky to follow, so aim to target each group of notes to the specific beat and stay relaxed.

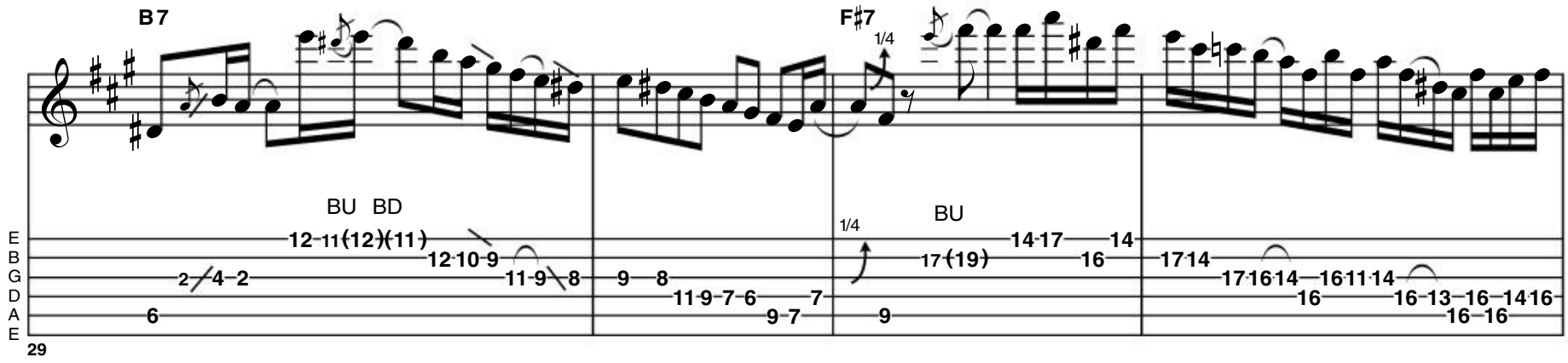
**[Bars 29-30]** B Mixolydian phrasing outlines the IV chord implied by the blues riff. It offers some respite from the legato onslaught, but the position shifts require focus.

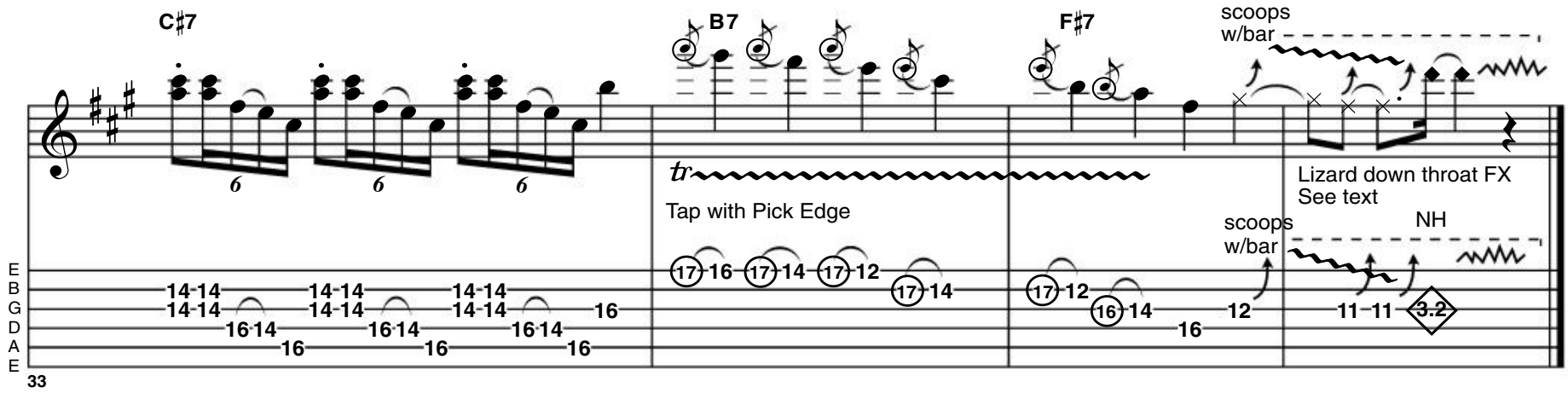
**[Bars 31-35]** We head back to Pentatonic/Mixolydian bluesy double-stop licks, before ending with trills performed with fast pick tapping though a descending figure.

**[Bar 36]** This lick starts at the end of bar 35 and is the famous 'Lizard Down The Throat'. Fret random third-string notes sliding down the neck, while depressing the whammy bar and raising it as you slide, to maintain the pitch as you descend. This might require extra study, but the result sounds fantastic! Hit the harmonic at the 3rd fret, second string and yank the bar up before dive-bombing the strings to conclude the piece.



## PIECE 4 HARD ROCK STYLE

**[Bars 1-9]** Here are several ideas heard in classic JS recordings. Lots of big E5 powerchord riffage, as well as the tight palm-muted open sixth string. Look out for the fast E Blues scale pull-off figure, plus the arpeggiated A7/C# and Aadd11 chords, which illustrate how Joe adds harmonic variations to a powerful riff. This riff concludes with a descending E Harmonic Minor run, performed in harmony.

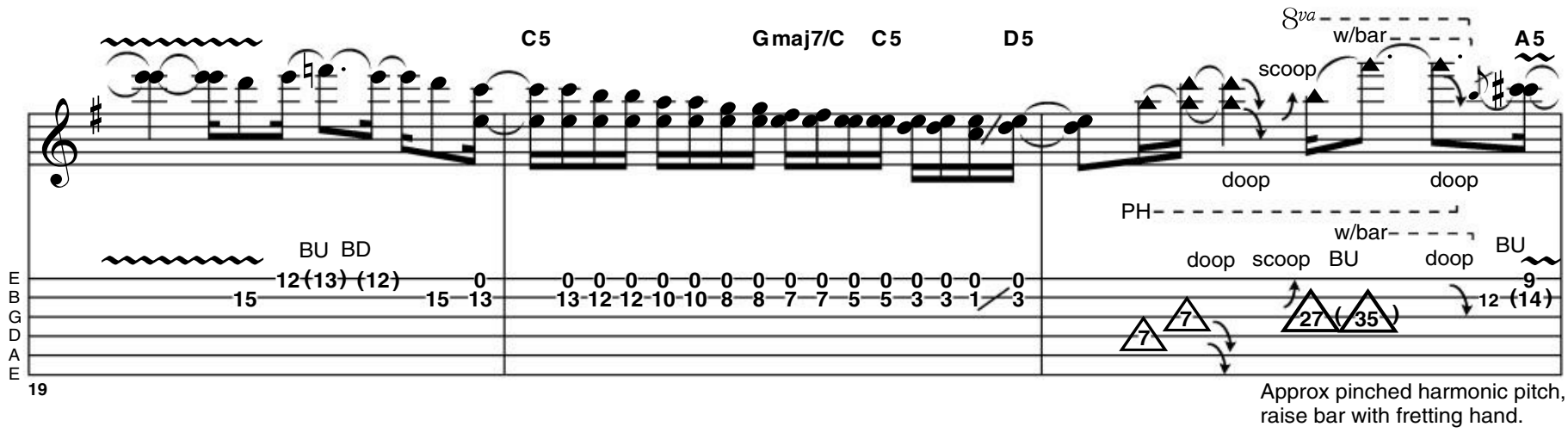
**[Bars 10-13]** The main melody features a figure based around E Phrygian Dominant. Look out for the rhythmic whammy bar lick, where you bounce your fretting hand on the bar. This melody also outlines the accompanying chords of F#7add11, and Fmaj7add#11, once again using the whammy bar for phrasing variations. I also used the wah-wah pedal for this opening melody.

**[Bars 14 -17]** The second half of the verse has a more blues-based feel in terms of scale choice and phrasing. This section uses a lot of double-stops and blues licks using E Dorian an E Minor Pentatonic, and our hard rock piece concludes with a fast pick-tapping trill and pick scrape.

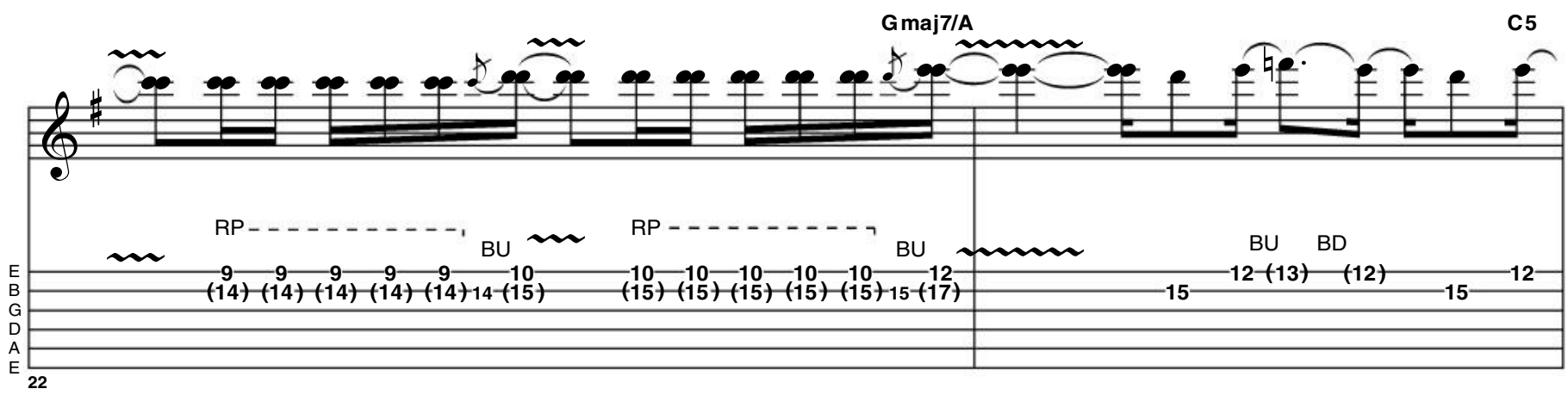
## PIECE 4 **HARD ROCK STYLE** ...CONTINUED

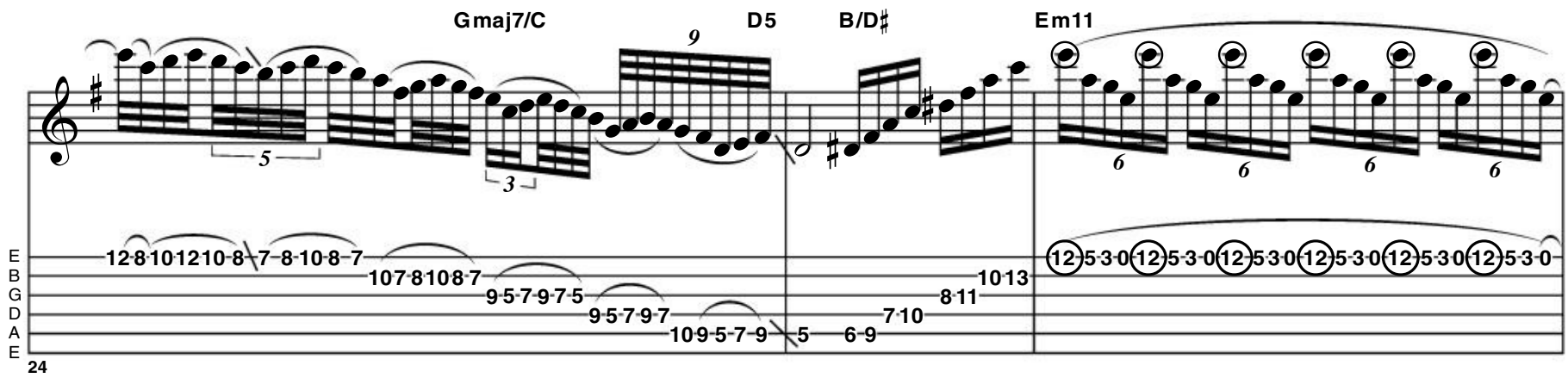
**[Bars 18-21]** The chorus kicks off with a shift to A Mixolydian, outlined with an ascending unison bend figure. We modulate to C Lydian, descending the scale on the second string while picking the open first string. This section concludes over the D5 chord, implying D Mixolydian, and kicks off with natural harmonics at the 7th fret to outline the chord. We conclude this section with with a crazy harmonic/whammy bar pull-up idea. Play a pinched harmonic on the open third string, approximating the 27th fret. Simultaneously grab the whammy bar and depress it, scooping into the the harmonic, then yank up the bar to raise the pitch!

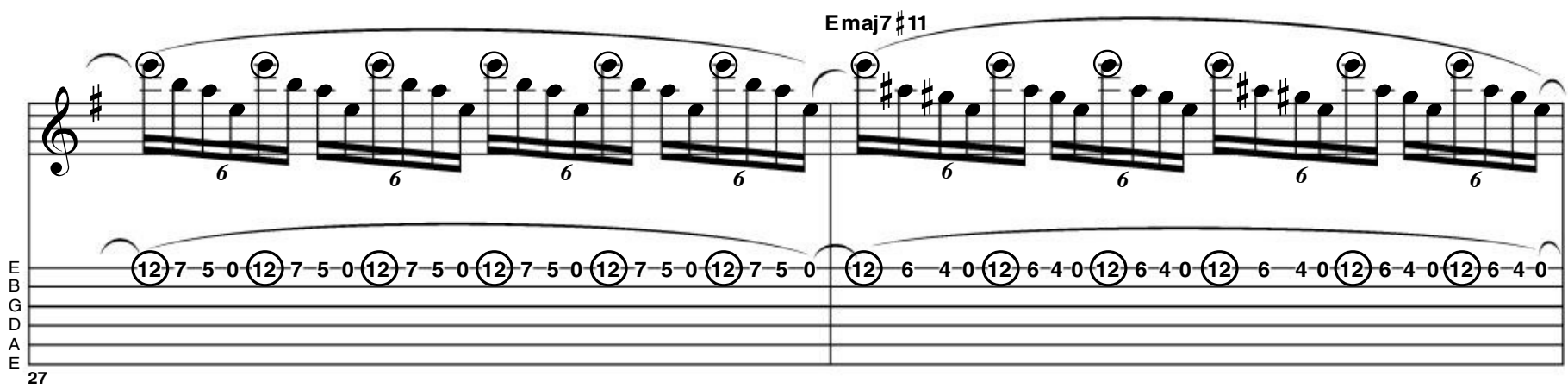
**[Bars 22-24]** We start with an ascending unison bend lick, but conclude with a fast three-note legato run in C Lydian targeting the D root note at the start of bar 25. Position your hands so the fingertips are making contact with the strings. Also don't 'grab' the neck; stay relaxed to keep the legato smooth and aid the position shifts.
**[Bar 25]** We outline the B/D# chord with an ascending Diminished 7th run.
**[Bars 26-31]** Here's how Joe negotiates key changes with tapping. It's based around E Aeolian and E Lydian. We conclude with a string bend, followed by our final pinched harmonic lick, raising the bar once again with the fretting hand!

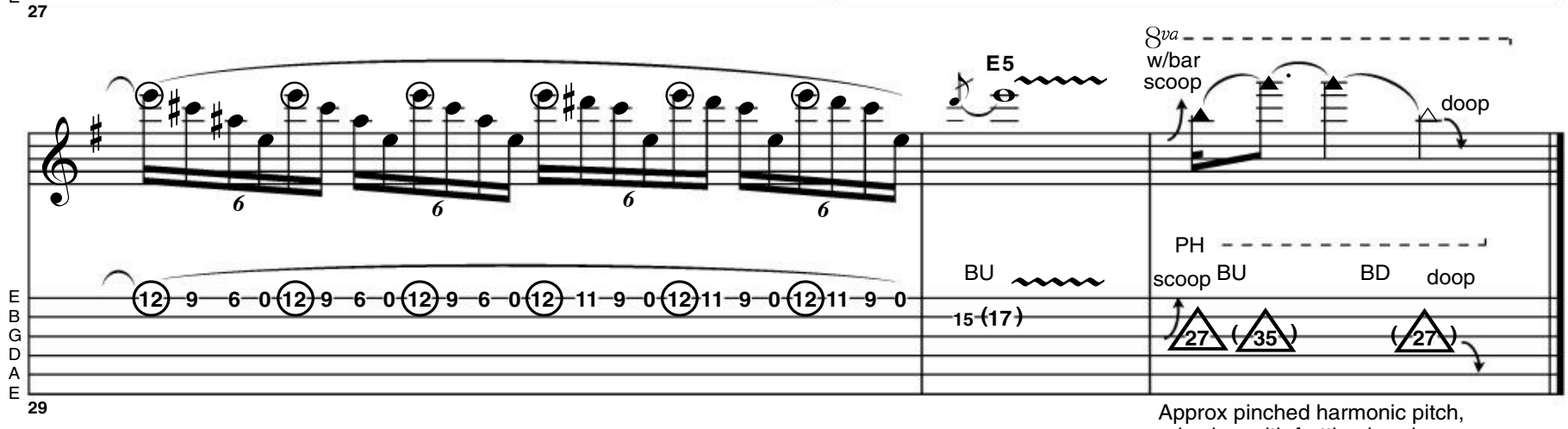



Approx pinched harmonic pitch, raise bar with fretting hand.




Approx pinched harmonic pitch, raise bar with fretting hand.

# A LOVE LETTER TO SATCH

For many, Joe Satriani represents the ultimate voice of instrumental rock guitar. **Jason Sidwell** asks 20 top players what makes him so unique. And also, what Satch song is their favourite?

## STEVE VAI

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe is connected to the inspired melodies in his heart and has the musical ear and a command of the technique to manifest them in an effective and powerful way.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Cryin'. Besides the flawless intonation, complete mastery of phrasing and finger tone, the melody is the voice of God flowing through a human.

## JOEL HOEKSTRA

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe writes great melodies and songs, not just technical showcases.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Midnight. It's just a very musical and unique tapping piece.

## STEVE MORSE

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe combines a great melodic sense with an exciting instinct for sonic flourishes, such as right hand hammering, effortless harmonics, vibrato bar gymnastics and more.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
My favourite track is still Satch Boogie because it has that tempo and feel which I already love, but he does such a fantastic job of making it interesting and ever changing. Putting the middle breakdown part in, even though the radio play executives wouldn't want it, is icing on the cake.

## GEOFF TYSON

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe has such a deep understanding of different music styles and sonic spaces, and his ability to express these elements in catchy, exciting songs makes him a master musician not just a great guitarist.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
From the first JS album, Banana Mango. I remember Joe playing this to me during one of our lessons, and him explaining that every sound on the album is made with an electric guitar. So weird and fantastic!

## STEVE LUKATHER

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe is one of the finest guitar players ever to pick up the instrument. He is a flawless player. I have had the honour of standing next to him on many occasions. He never makes a mistake or plays something lame. It's always world class and fun and interesting and his jaw-dropping chops always done with taste.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
This a hard question. I first heard Surfing With The Alien and was floored. I actually met him at NAMM that same day many years ago. We were destined to be friends. Ice 9 and Summer Song and... I could go on and on.. too much great work there. He always has evolved and experimented and writes such perfect melodies to go with blistering tracks. It's no wonder he is one of the most loved and respected guitar players of all time and is also a dear friend of mine.

## OZ NOY

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
What makes Joe special is his strong pop sensibility with very strong hooks and grooves. That's what puts him above most others. I really enjoy his vision of sounds, concept and writing on his records. Also, his tone is unbelievable.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Satch Boogie & Always With Me Always With You (it's hard to choose between them!). I grew up with those songs, they are the sound track of my teen years, growing up playing guitar. His playing is fantastic but again, he makes good songs!

## NICK JOHNSTON

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
I spent a lot of time listening to Joe's records growing up. What always stuck out was his focus on melody and harmony. I also loved his prolific output of experimental music whether it was Engines Of Creation, Chickenfoot, use of acoustic instruments and vocals, he was and is always trying to expand his universe. I try to follow in his footsteps by letting the artistry come first, and what people expect and think come last. Also, I respect his restraint. Joe can burn, but he often plays phrases and lines that serve the moment, rather than the guitar playing listener.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
My favourite piece of his would change often, but usually it comes back to Friends from The Extremist. Melody, arrangement, guitar tone, performance and production are spot-on. The record as a whole is one I would consider his masterpiece. I think it's much more difficult than people realise to write a melody in the high octave on a guitar and not only have it work for the song, but have it become iconic and immediately recognisable.

## BRETT GARSED

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Besides Joe's otherworldly musicianship, the thing that's always set him apart for me is his songwriting. I really like the way he applies a pop-rock format to a challenging instrumental. His songs always have an incredibly strong hook, even when he's using exotic scales.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
My favourite is actually the first one I ever heard which is Not Of This Earth. I fully expected the song to be in C# Minor as the intro chords had a very dark sound and mood to them but when that E bass kicked in and flipped it around I was an instant fan. Those kinds of twists and turns are what define a great songwriter for me and Joe's songs are full of them.

## CARL VERHEYEN

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Included in his command of insane rock guitar technique and modern tricks there is a deep connection with the blues. This is missing from so many of the current crop of shredders.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
I'm a Chickenfoot fan. Joe has such solid time it's great to hear him with drummer Chad Smith.They can play rock eighth notes all day and I'll be happy. Check out their live version of Highway Star.

## MARTY FRIEDMAN

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe is not only a wonderful guitarist, but he has mastered this elusive algorithm: his playing is not only impressive to seasoned professionals, but is exciting and inspiring to people who have never touched a guitar.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Always With Me, Always With You. It seems aimed at the kind of audience that likes my emotional ballads, but reaches a wider demographic. Joe knows how to deliver quality guitar work in such a way that it trains them to subliminally understand and crave good guitar playing.

## PAUL GILBERT

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe has the biggest notes. I don't know how he makes them so big. They are wonderful! And they move an audience. I want big notes like that, but mine keep being little. After Joe let me tour with him, my notes got a little bigger. I think I need to hang around Joe more.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Satch Boogie was the first song I heard from Joe, and it was a, 'Pull the car over, and listen' moment for me. That's still my favourite. Why? First of all, I like boogies. Second, Joe tells a story with his playing. His parts are well-composed, while keeping the fire that most players can only get by inspired moments of improvisation.

## ALEX SILL

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
I think he holds an important place in guitar history. He's influenced so many of my own influences, along with legions of other players, so he's had a pretty ubiquitous effect in that way. Joe was at the vanguard of a new generation of virtuoso technicians who not only had the chops, but also brought with them all the understanding of mechanics and theory of music in such a way that gave rock guitar players a beacon as to what being a more well rounded, learned musician can offer. Joe can shred, while always bringing along a strong melodic voice that is influenced by the blues tradition, and supplemented by a unique sense of harmony.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
I've always dug the entirety of the Surfing With The Alien album, so my favourite track would probably be amongst those tracks. Satch Boogie, Ice 9; these pieces have all the alien-like technical flair, while also being grounded in catchy, ear worm melodic sensibilities.

## REB BEACH

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
I was a session player for Atlantic Records in New York city when I heard that the guy who taught Steve Vai was playing in the Village. I went to see the show not knowing anything except that. I remember being blown away by two things. How precise he was, and how many tricks he knew. He did every trick in the book, and his legato was to die for. It was perfection, and it rocked!!
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
My favourite is Lords Of Kharma. Lydian is my favourite scale but I had never heard a rock song in Lydian! It really stood out live, and I remember the audience went crazy. It's so unique and cool, and the solo is magical.

## DAN PATLANSKY

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe explores the outer boundaries of the guitar with extreme authority and zero limitation. He is one of those players that

JOSEPH CULTICE

completely redefined what's possible on the instrument, and continues to do so.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Slow Down Blues has always been my favourite. It showcases his acoustic playing, songwriting, and electric blues playing. The acoustic intro part is jaw-droppingly beautiful, and he plays the blues like he was born to. Always blows my sock off!

*"Besides the flawless intonation, complete mastery of phrasing and finger tone, the melody is the voice of God flowing through a human"*

## ANDY TIMMONS

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
What sets Joe apart from everybody is his great songwriting abilities. He, of course, plays with incredible technique and the perfect balance of precision and wild abandon, but he manages to wrap it up together in extremely catchy riffs and melodies. Easily one of my biggest influences.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
For favourite song (impossible!) I'm going to go with Unstoppable Momentum as it has everything! Great melody, clever modulations, unique tones, great sound, and I'm a huge Vinnie Colaiuta fan!

## MARK LETTIERI

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
He's a master of melody. He also has a trademark way of incorporating harmony you might not necessarily hear in pop or rock, while still keeping it accessible. Of course his technique is other-worldly, but it's all about how he uses that skill to serve the composition, rather than dominate it.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Cool #9 has always been a favourite. I love the organic, jamming nature of it, and it grooves so well that whole album has such a killer vibe. Memories and Time Machine would be up there too; the former has what might be my favourite Satch solo, and the melodies on the latter are super anthemic.

## JEFF KOLLMAN

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
His music has always been so catchy it didn't need lyrics. The guitar melody was the vocal. And it was rare to hear an instrumental guitar-driven single on the radio.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
A standout track for me is Hordes Of Locusts from the live Dreaming #11 album. I love the raw, live three-piece sound and fat groove that's going on. It is a bit more harmonically complex as well.

## ERIC JOHNSON

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
Joe is unique because of his consistent, endless virtuosity. He always puts on a good show. He also combines his fiery playing with softer moments very well.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
Always With Me, Always With You because it's just a beautiful song.

## MATTIAS IA EKLUNDH

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
He has a tremendously distinct tone, immediately recognisable, but most of all his sense of melody. So many players can shred in the most insane of ways. Very few can write and deliver the most beautiful of melodies the way Joe can.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
I listened to most of the early stuff and those albums have a special place in my heart. However, my all-time favourite album is the self-titled one from 1995 and the track Cool #9. Glynn Johns did a great job producing that one. To the point and extremely laid-back. I love it.

## GUS G

**What do you think makes Joe Satriani unique?**
It's his phrasing, his melodies, his tone. He's a guitarist that you identify right away with the first note and his compositional skills are a school of their own. Joe makes instrumental music that can appeal to the masses. I can't name many other players that have achieved that.
**What is your favourite JS track and why?**
I don't have just one. I love many tracks of his. Ice #9, The Crush Of Love, War, Flying In A Blue Dream, the list can go on!

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ON VIDEO

# GEORGE MARIOS
# Video Masterclass

In this masterclass the Greek-born, UK-based virtuoso solos over Jason Sidwell's track, If You Will. Prepare for some jaw-dropping licks! **Andy Saphir** is your guide.

**ABILITY RATING** Advanced ★★★★★

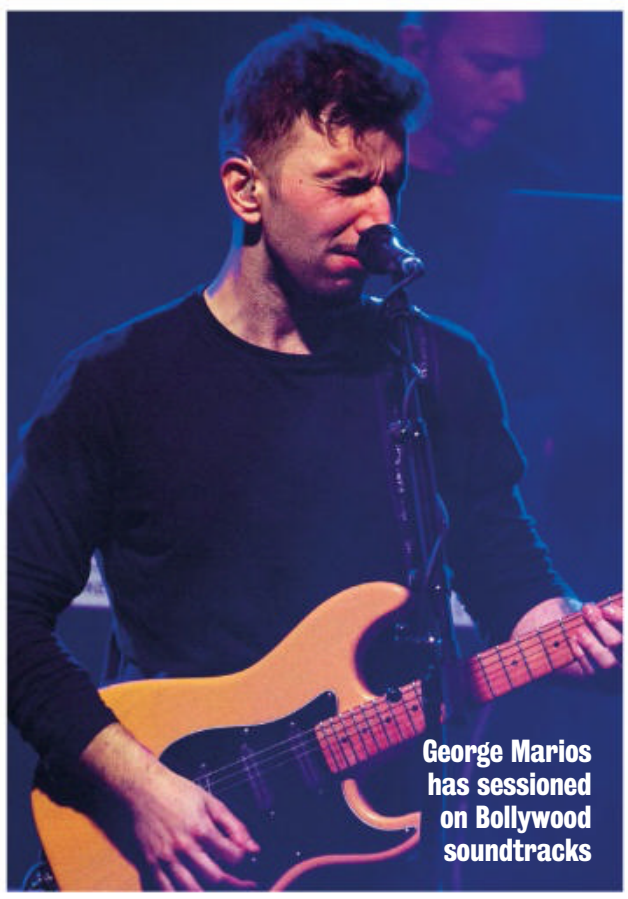
**Info** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul
**Key** C **Tempo** 122bpm

**Will improve your...** ✔ Hybrid picking technique ✔ Playing over chord changes ✔ Intervallic soloing

George Marios's unique approach to modern soloing combines elements of rock, blues, jazz and country to create a style that's jaw droppingly impressive, musical and inventive. He effortlessly uses highly developed techniques such as hybrid picking and legato to play complex lines that feature intervallic jumps, pleasing dissonance, and harmonic approaches, while his knowledge of music theory and its application combines to create amazing, inventive and imaginative guitar music.

For this issue, George solos over Jason Sidwell's track, If You Will. It has an upbeat Major tonality in a pop-rock-fusion style at a tempo of 122bpm, and features some interesting rhythmic elements as well as complex chord changes.

The first thing to do when deciding what to play over a set of chord changes is to know what key it's in, so the first tricky thing about the tune presents itself. Figuring out what key it's in isn't easy. That might sound a little strange, but each section has its own key centre or various key centres, making it difficult to pin a common tonality to the piece. Therefore, from a soloing perspective, each section can be viewed as being in a key of its own. But as the main musical hook seems to be the C-F-B♭7 seen in the intro, interlude and outro, I've transcribed it in the key of C throughout, without potential confusion of multiple modulations.


George Marios has sessioned on Bollywood soundtracks

Moving on to what George plays over this harmonically challenging tune presents the second tricky thing... it's pretty difficult!

***"Hybrid picking is so instinctive that the licks we invent often involve notes that skip over multiple strings"***

The most noticeable technique that he employs throughout the piece is hybrid picking, which at his level is very highly developed. As a hybrid picker myself, the technique is so instinctive that the licks that we invent often involve notes that might skip over multiple strings, as we're using the pick on one string and plucking others with our fingers, so phrases that incorporate intervallic leaps of 3rds, 6ths or 10ths come more naturally than if we just used a pick, as our second or third fingers are already ideally positioned to pluck a higher string.

If you're not already a hybrid picker, some of the licks George plays in the tune might feel very strange, so it's really important to study the video carefully to see his picking and fretting-hand approaches. To understand where the imagination comes from to think up the kinds of inventive licks that George plays, needs diligent study too. For example, from a musical and technical perspective, country music uses Major tonalities and intervals such as mentioned before, regularly, with instruments such as guitars, pianos, mandolins, pedal steel guitars and banjos all playing lines using these as a matter of course. So studying country guitar will really help you to develop an understanding of how to construct musical lines incorporating these, as well as the technical skills necessary to execute them. The same musical and technical awareness applies to the bluesy and rockier influences found in George's approach, like the fast legato phrases and blues influenced lines he plays. When you combine these skills with the musical knowledge gained from studying jazz theory and its principals of chord and scale relationships, such as Major scale modes, Melodic Minor modes, and scales such as Whole-Tone and Diminished, then the potential to create musically and technically challenging phrases becomes pretty big.

I really hope you enjoy studying this piece. If you can learn it well enough to play it in its entirety, that would be absolutely fantastic, but learning enough bits of it to get a good idea of the musical and technical approaches that George uses would be arguably even more beneficial. By not only focusing on the technical aspects of the lick itself, but how it relates musically to the harmony behind it, will help you to develop those ideas yourself and hopefully help you to use them in your own compositions and playing. Have fun!

## Get the Tone

George used his Reverend Buckshot guitar on the neck pickup into his Line 6 Helix using a Fender amp model with an impulse response from JTC. The overall sound is pretty clean, but has a bit of amp overdrive and compression for thickness and sustain, but not so much that it sounds distorted. Either single-coils or humbuckers would be suitable, depending on how thick you want the sound to be.

George plays Reverend (above) and G&L guitars (previous page)

**Jason Sidwell** talked to George about his influences, time with The Pineapple Thief and his own music.

**What are your main influences and how have they shaped you?**
I'd say that it has been different artists at different times. If I were pressed to name a few, however, I would say that it has to be Guthrie Govan on the guitar front and an equal tie between Bruce Soord of The Pineapple Thief (who I consider to be one of the world's finest songwriters), Pink Floyd and Sting on the songwriting front. The thing I admire about all the above is their fearlessness in pursuing new forms, sounds and creative approaches.

**Did you study formally?**
I attended a Popular Music course at Leeds College of Music when I first emigrated to the UK at the age of 17. I have dear memories about the people there and met some very passionate teachers, but I learnt the most from my fellow students.

**What aspects of your guitar technique have you worked on the most?**
When I first started playing, I was obsessed with alternate picking. I loved the energy and the attack of it. But I'd say that most of the tools I use came about in due time and fairly organically. So, I never actually sat down to practise hybrid picking, for instance. It was just something I got used to over time because I would slowly introduce it to my playing, as opposed to sitting down with the metronome and drilling hybrid picking exercises.

**You used a clean guitar tone for your video performance; what encouraged that?**
I love a clean tone with a bit of a bite. It means that I can do things (specially chordal style lead playing) which may sound too harsh with a high-gain tone. I felt like it suited your track and what I wanted to play over it.

**How did you get to be working with The Pineapple Thief?**
Bruce Soord (the singer and principal writer from The Pineapple Thief) mixed my album Daffodil back in 2018. I made sure to let Bruce know that I am a fan of the band and to let me know if they ever needed a guitarist. It so happened that they needed one so I had the privilege of working with them for a couple of years, right up to the pandemic, and I recorded two live albums with them.

**What songs did you particularly enjoy playing on the tours?**
I love the song In Exile. It features an incredible opening by drummer Gavin Harrison and the form and arrangement of the song are genius. The extended outro guitar solo is also a bonus! White Mist is another great one; an extended piece which explores different forms and features great moments in it. Finally, The Final Thing On My Mind is another stunner, it's simply one of a kind.

**What do you have in the diary for 2022 - albums, tours, etc?**
I am in the process of finishing a second album which is probably the most ambitious thing I have done creatively. It's being brought to life by some incredible musicians. The plan is to finish it and then take the project out live. I'd like to secure a support slot on a tour so I can play a variety of good venues.

*For more on George Marios visit www.georgemarios.co.uk*

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## TOP THREE LICKS

**BAR 16 AM PENTATONIC CHORDAL RUN**
Although a short phrase, George uses the notes of Am Pentatonic (A-C-D- E-G) over an F#7 chord to create an 'outside' Altered Dominant feel. The effect of this sound is further pronounced by playing the notes in a 'spread triad' configuration, as opposed to the more conventional single-note line approach. These combined techniques make for a highly catchy and different sound.

**BARS 27-28 F LYDIAN RUN**
This fast descending lick that George plays so effortlessly on the video, implies an F Lydian (F-G -B-C-D-E) tonality. Using the notes of F Lydian mode's parent scale of C Major (C-D-E-F-G-A-B), large intervals of a 6th are effortlessly incorporated in order to create rapid shifts of pitch. These large intervals help to create an ear-twistingly impressive sound. The use of the hybrid picking technique is necessary here to achieve the desired effect.

**BARS 36-37 SCALE DISSONANCE AND HARMONIC APPROACH**
As part of a longer phrase, these bars feature George's approach of using scale tones across pairs of strings. By allowing the notes to ring together, a momentary dissonance of a tone or semitone is created which, when resolved, sounds really cool! George also holds down a string with one finger whilemoving another finger on another string, which creates a harmonic type effect of a note ringing on while the line is still moving.

## CHORD CHART **IF YOU WILL**

## FULL PIECE **IF YOU WILL**

**INTRO [Bars 2-4]** George establishes a catchy melody over the C and F Major chords using notes from C Major Pentatonic (C-D-E-G-A), with a single-note line approach followed by 6th intervals. Over the B♭7 chord, he plays a D Diminished triad (D-F-A♭) which highlight the 3rd, 5th and ♭7 of the B♭7 chord (B♭-D-F-A♭).
**VERSE 1 [Bars 5-12]** The first two bars here establish the key of A, where we see more of George's 6th interval chord approaches using notes from the A Major scale (A-B-C#-D-E-F#-G#). The next two bars are in C, so he switches to a C Major scale approach (C-D-E-F-G-A-B) with a rapid-fire lick using arpeggios and hybrid picking. The F#m chord which follows is led into with a C Major scale line but marked strongly with its root note of F#. The F# Dorian (F#-G#-A-B-C#-D#-E) line following, leads into the B7 chord (B-D#-F#-A) where the 3rd (D#) and root (B) chord tones are marked.
**BRIDGE 1 [Bars 13-20]** George reprises a variation of the verse melody over the first two bars of A. Over the following G7 bar, he uses G Mixolydian (G-A-B-C-D-E-F) with more hybrid-picked intervals and the first of the 'dissonant' cross-string ideas (bar 15 beat 1& where he hammers on from the 7th fret, third-string D note to the 9th-fret E, but then plucks the semitone higher F note on the second string, sounding those two strings together momentarily).

18+

# WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

# AVAXHOME-

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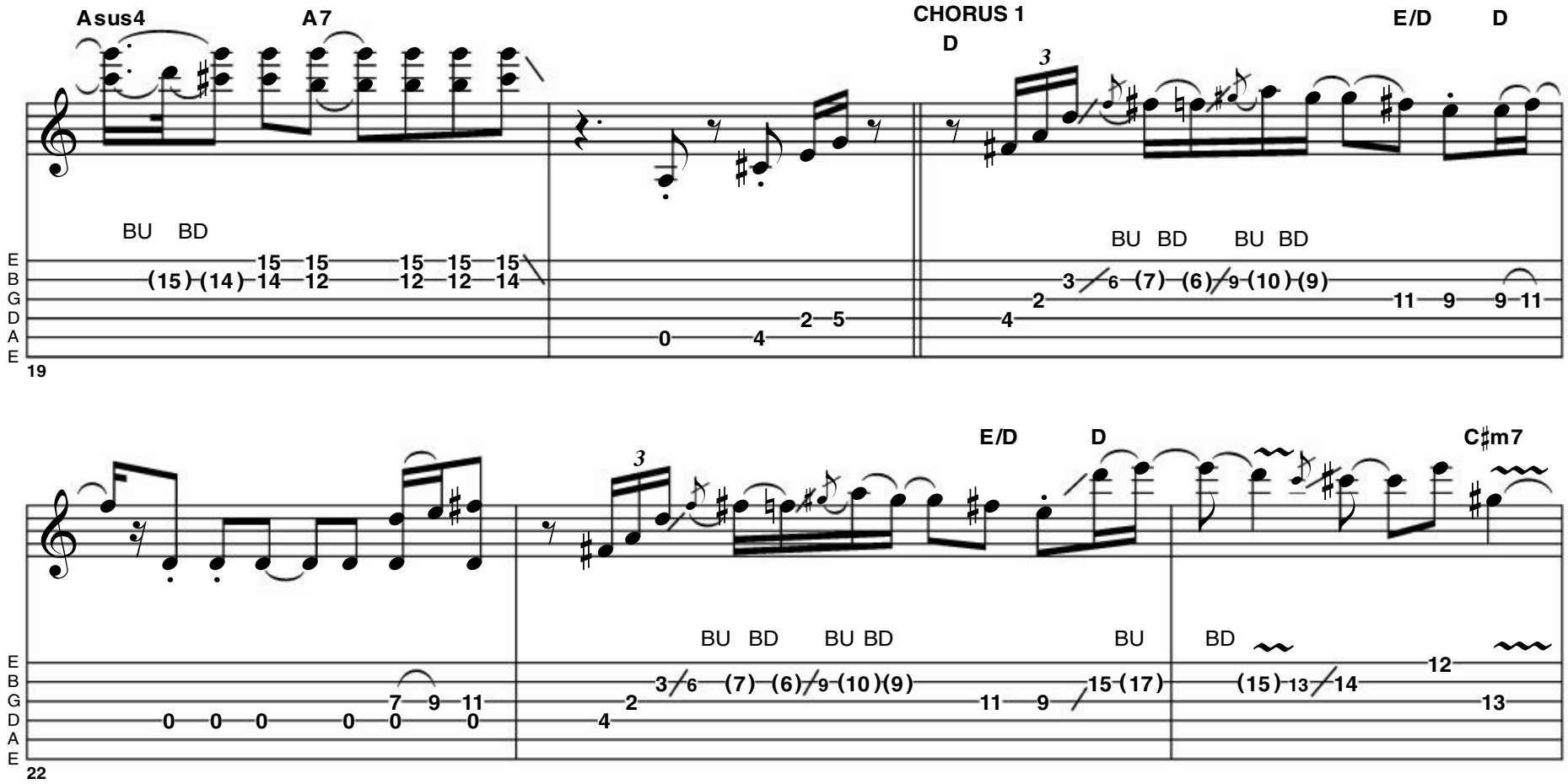
## FULL PIECE **IF YOU WILL**

**CHORUS 1 [Bars 21-28]** Because the chords in the first part of the chorus are D Major and E/D, the scale of D Lydian (D-E-F#-G#-A-B-C#) is the perfect sound for George to choose for the melodic phrases he plays here. Note the use of some nice little quirky bends. The quick-fire lick in bars 27-28 again use notes from the F Lydian scale (F-G-A-B-C-D-E) scale (see Top 3 Licks boxout for explanation).

**INTERLUDE [Bars 29-31]** George's intro melody appears again here, followed by a beautiful and surprising jazzy lick over the B♭7 using the B♭ Lydian Dominant scale (B♭-C-D-E-F-G-A♭).

**VERSE 2 [Bars 32-39]** The main feature is the fast phrase in bars 35-38, explained in the Top 3 Licks boxout. The answering phrase in bar 39 demonstrates George's approach with this descending E Blues lick using notes from E Minor Pentatonic (E-G-A-B-D) and E Major Pentatonic (E-F#-G#-B-C#).



## FULL PIECE **IF YOU WILL**

**BRIDGE 2 [Bars 40-47]** Here's a country sounding chromatic 6th interval based phrase using G Mixolydian (G-A-B-C-D-E-F) in bars 41-42 is followed in bar 43 by an F# Whole-Tone scale (F#-G#-A#-B#-C##-D##) over the F#7. This short, quirky phrase uses hybrid picking and makes the already tense sound of the Whole-Tone scale even tenser! The following bluesy A Minor Pentatonic (A-C-D-E-G) phrase over the G7 anticipates an A Minor harmony, but George cleverly marks the following actual A Major harmony by playing the same kind of phrase but altering the previously played ♭3 (C) to the Major 3rd (C#).

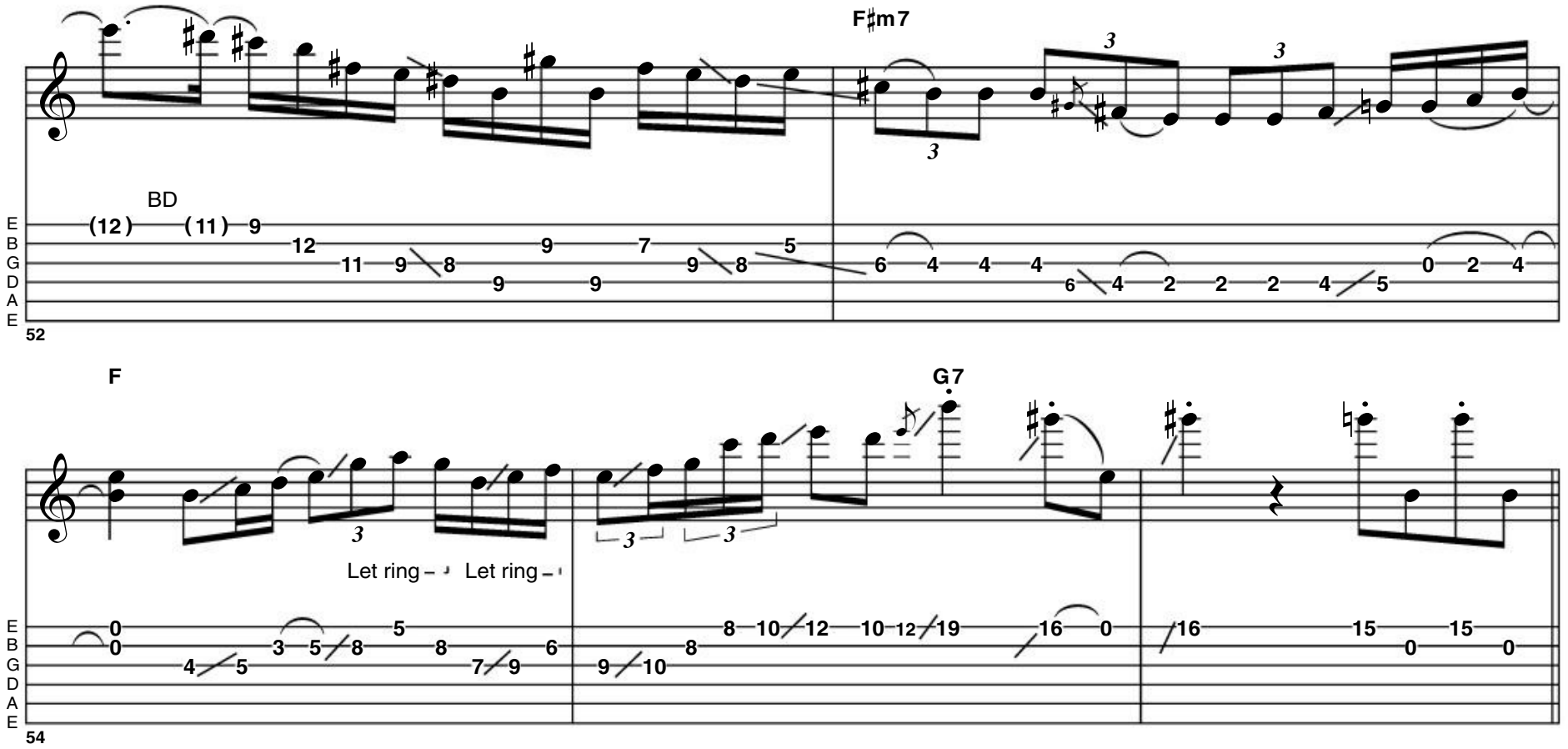
**CHORUS 2 [Bars 48-56]** Again, this chorus starts melodically with D Lydian approaches, but in bars 52-55 goes into a much higher gear with another amazing rapid-fire lick involving George's trademark dissonant scale tones, 6th intervals and hybrid picking. Stunning!

FULL PIECE **IF YOU WILL**

**MIDDLE 8 [Bars 57-64]** This section features a more laid-back feel. Largely diatonic to A Minor, the main technical approaches used are a selection of skilfully played semitone bends which mark out various notes of the chords. Make sure these bends are accurately pitched when you play them.

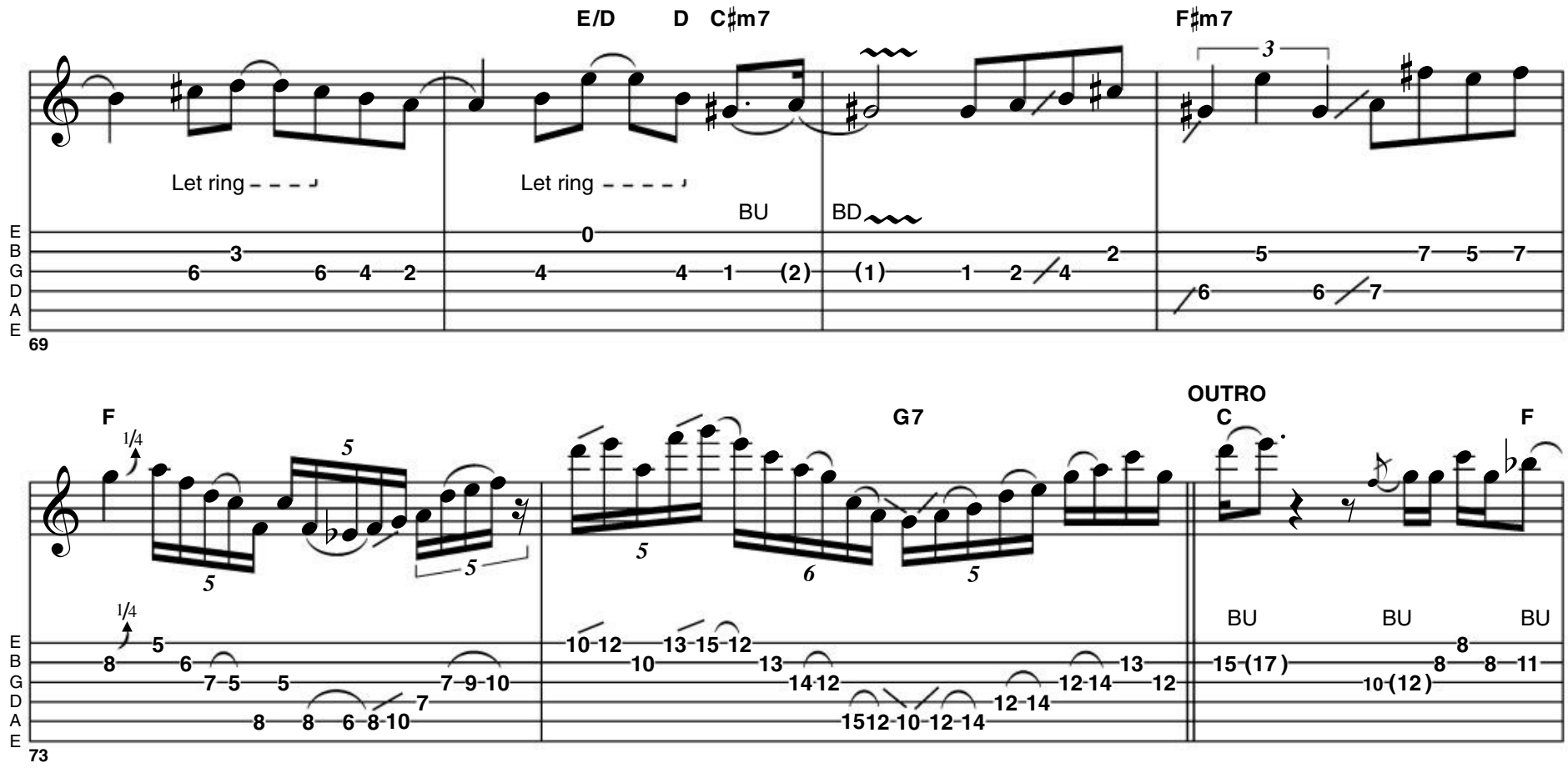
**CHORUS 3 [Bars 65-74]** In the final chorus George plays more lovely melodic D Lydian phrases. Note how strongly the first phrase starts on the Major 7th (C#).

The ultra fast lick in the last two bars here is arguably the most impressive yet, not only technically, but how musically skilfully the Fmaj7 based arpeggio (over the F Major chord) part of the phrase leads into a G Major Pentatonic run over the G7 and then resolves perfectly on the 3rd (E) note of the C chord at the start of the outro. Examining these musical approaches will help you to understand how these lines are created and why they work.



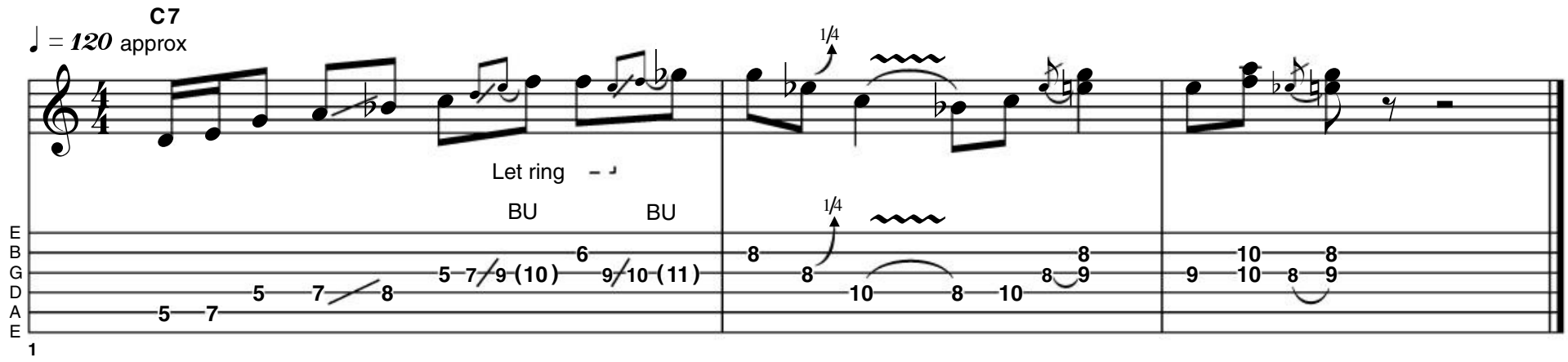
## FULL PIECE **IF YOU WILL**

**OUTRO [Bars 75-85]** The harmony here is the repeated C-F-B♭7 intro and interlude section, over which George plays some emotively biting bluesy licks.

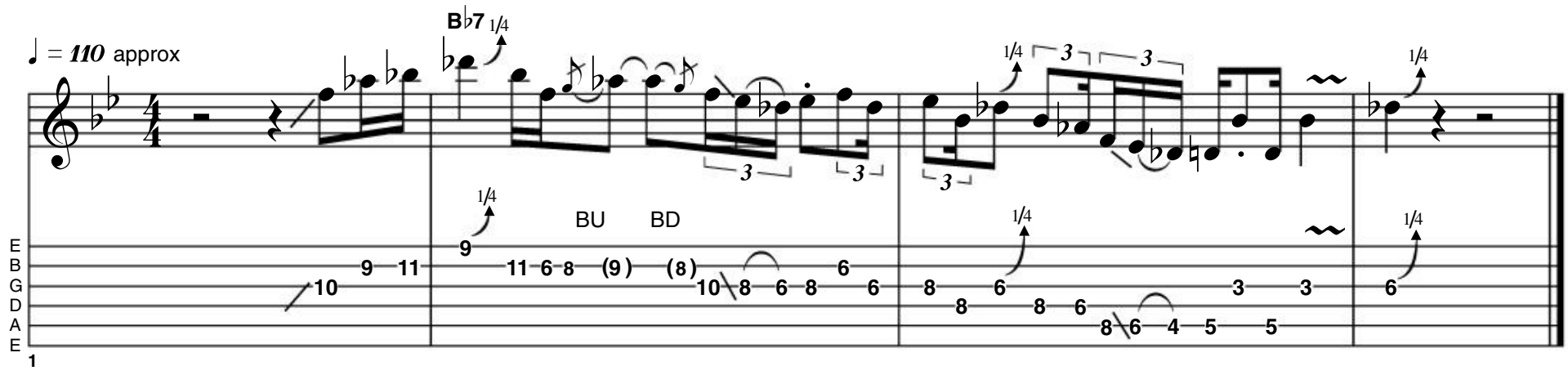


## 6 DEMONSTRATED EXAMPLES

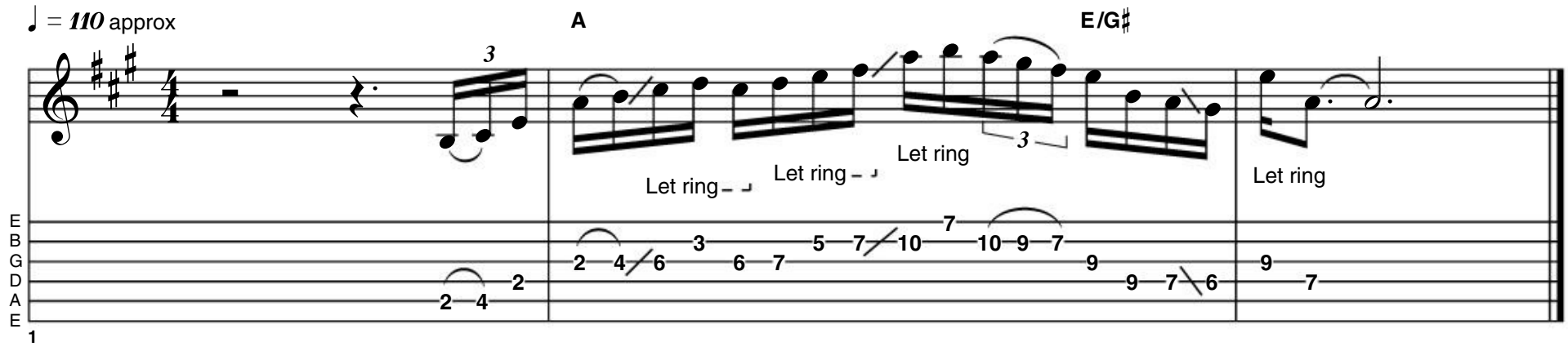
**EX 1 BLUESY C MIXOLYDIAN PHRASE** A bluesy approach to the C chord using notes from C Major Pentatonic (C-D-E-G-A) and C Minor Pentatonic (C-E♭-F-G-B♭).



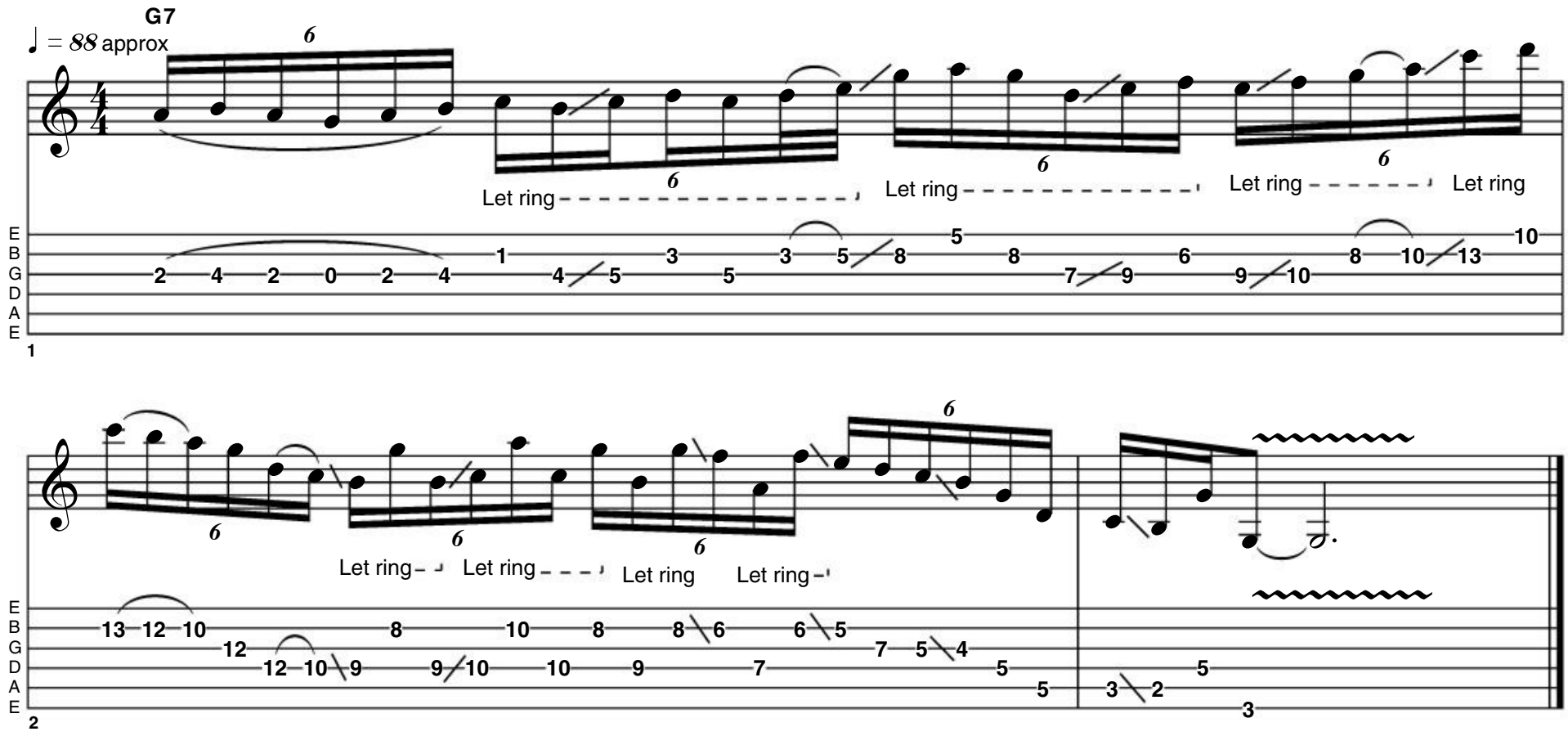

**EX2 BLUESY B♭ MIXOLYDIAN PHRASE** A similar bluesy approach, this time in B♭.




**EX 3 A MAJOR PHRASE FOR A-E/G#** Using A Major scale (A-B-C#-D-E-F#-G#), George uses hybrid picking to cross strings. We see his cross-string 'dissonant' tone-semitone scale intervals here too. Note how, in the main, the lower string is played with the pick and the higher string with the second finger of the picking hand.



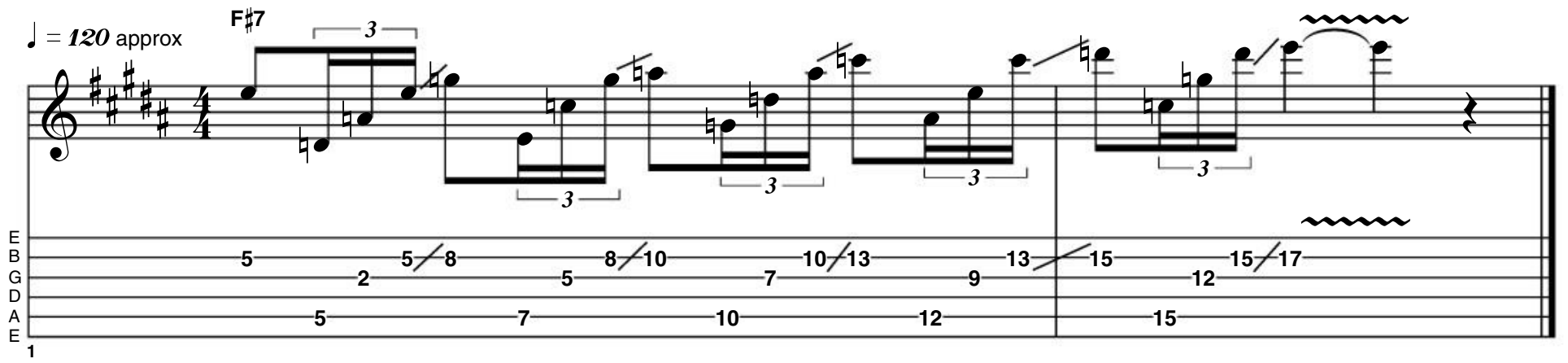

**EX 4 G MIXOLYDIAN PHRASE FOR G7** This amazing phrase is quite long but showcases all those great trademark George Marios approaches!



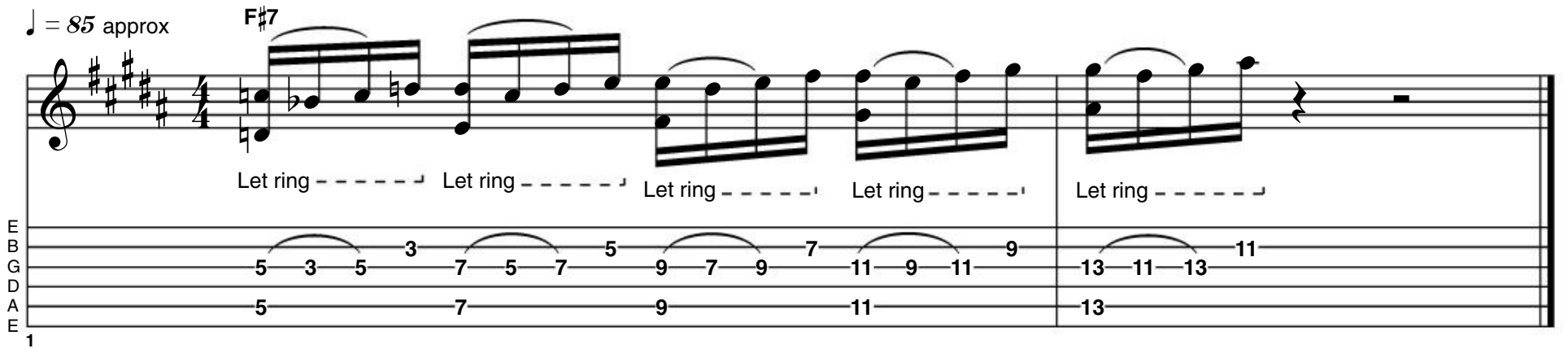
George during a legato moment for his solo on If You Will

## 6 DEMONSTRATED EXAMPLES ...CONTINUED

**EX 5 A MINOR PENTATONIC (SPREAD TRIADS) OVER F#7** George demonstrates this on the fifth, third and second strings (see the Top Three Licks Boxout for explanation).




**EX 6 WHOLE-TONE CHORDAL PHRASE OVER F#7** Whole-Tone scale (R-2-3-#4-#5-♭7) sounds great over a Dominant chord due to the tension of the #4th and #5th. George demonstrates how he uses a chordal approach with this which gives a different and maybe even more ear bending-angle to the Whole-Tone sound!



# THE CROSSROADS
# Ten Iconic 335 Players

In celebration of this issue GT335, **John Wheatcroft's** pays tribute to a Gibson semi-solid masterpiece, the ES-335 and its offshoots, by exploring 10 equally masterful and iconic semi players.

**ABILITY RATING** Moderate/Advanced ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

**Info** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul
**Key** G Blues **Tempo** 140bpm Swing/Shuffle

**Will improve your...** ✔ Stylistic awareness and authenticity ✔ Application of idiomatic vocabulary ✔ Expression and articulation

The Gibson ES-335 was initially introduced in 1958. It was designed to combine the aesthetics of a regular arched-top f-hole styled semi-acoustic guitar with the volume and sustaining properties of a solidbody. This came courtesy of Ted McCarty's inspired decision to include a solid centre block upon which you could mount both the pickups and the bridge, with just the sides left hollow to add a sense of moving air and allowing for greater dynamic range. Add to this a pair of Seth Lover's revolutionary humbucking pickups and Gibson produced a match made in heaven. Needless to say, guitarists from of wide range of contrasting styles were quick to catch onto the sonic potential of these guitars and for over 60 years have made these semi-solid masterpieces a big part of their sound, either choosing Gibson or similar guitars from other guitar brands that were quick to catch on. Blues legend BBKing, rock and roller Chuck Berry, jazz-fusion session supremo Larry Carlton, indie superstar Noel Gallagher and hard rocker Dave Grohl all routinely go the semi-solid route. The purpose of this article is to explore 10 iconic players that typify what these beautifully versatile, dynamic and expressive instruments have to offer.

> ***'The choice to get a 335 was very practical. I play a lot of different styles of music and I wanted to get a guitar that could cover a lot of bags"***
> LARRY CARLTON

The versatility aspect is definitely one of the ES335's best qualities. Given the premise of our monthly Crossroads feature, exploring the common ground between blues and jazz-based guitar styles and highlighting the similarities along with the nuanced differences between these often intertwined worlds, I generally find my lefty ES-335 is the go-to guitar when it comes to recording the lion's share of these articles, and I have a lot of guitars to choose from. Larry Carlton expressed a similar sentiment when asked why he chose this particular model as his main workhorse instrument, with his sunburst '68 featured on literally hundreds of recordings as both a session musician and a recording and touring artist. Larry states, 'The choice to get a 335 was very practical. I play a lot of different styles of music and I wanted to get a guitar that could cover a lot of bags'. Indeed, Larry!

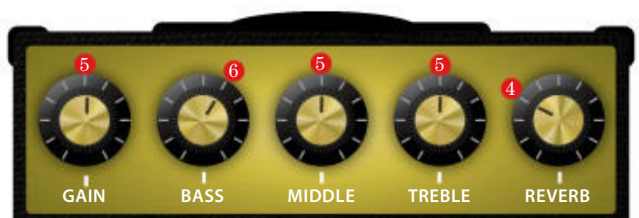
The musical examples that follow are based around a regular 12-bar blues in the key of G, with a shuffle feel at a medium tempo with both a turnaround intro and a four-bar tag ending. The context is a fantasy semi-solid jam session featuring 10 of the best, taking things in turn trading four-bar lines in pairs against an extending backing track. First up we see Chuck Berry paired with BB King, then onto Alvin Lee jamming with Larry Carlton, before combining Gary Moore with Warren Haynes. Next up we see Eric Johnson paired up with John Scofield, before we bring things to a close with Otis Rush and Eric Clapton inspired ideas.

As is so often the case, you can choose to learn the entire solo exactly as written or you can perhaps be more selective with your studying, just choosing the licks that immediately stand out and appeal to you (preferably new ones!). With this in mind, make sure you revisit this article over a period of time, as a phrase, lick or concept that might seem out of reach at the moment might not remain so elusive given some patient and diligent attention to detail and that most precious of commodities, time.

As always enjoy and have fun.

## TWO VOLUME CONTROLS

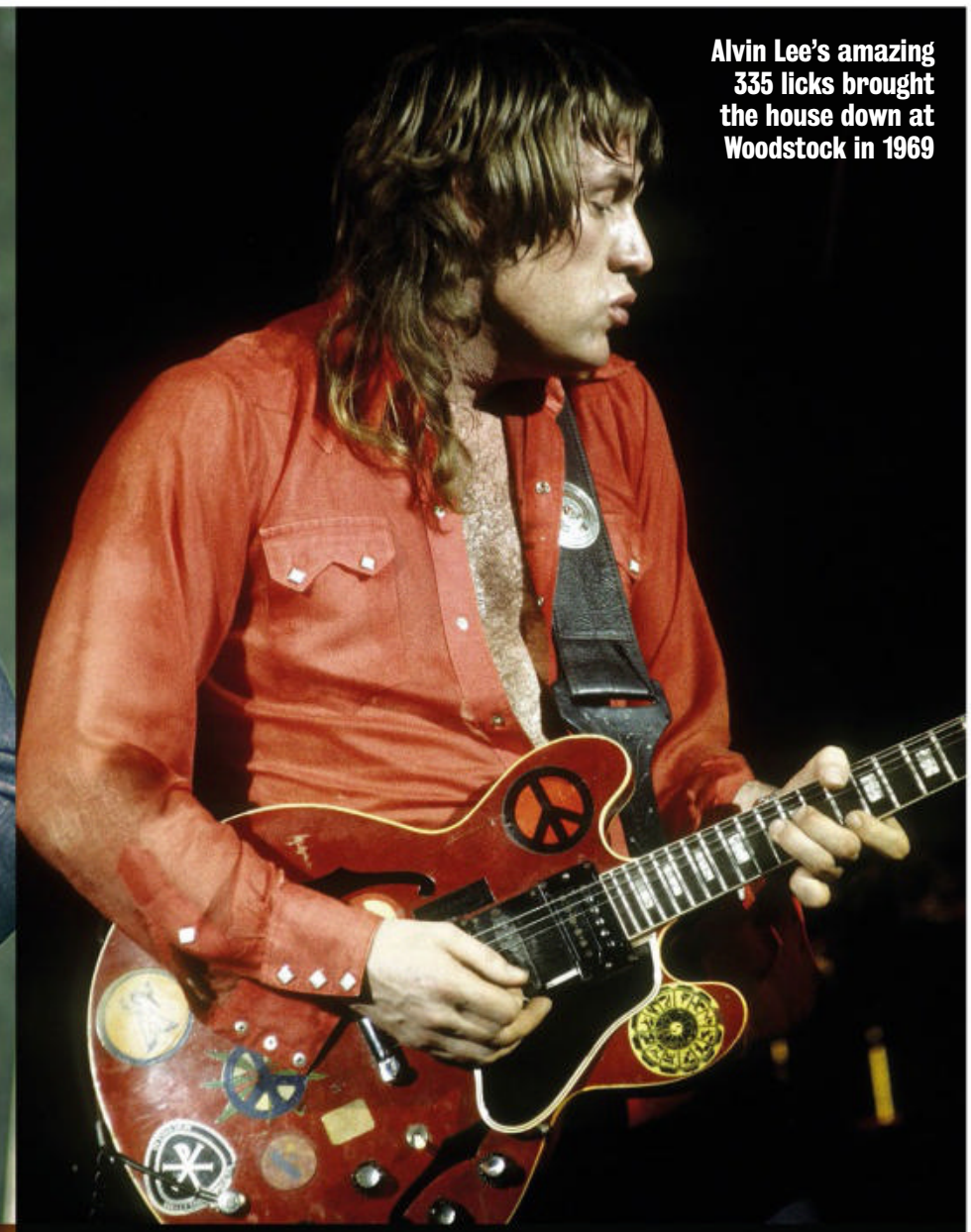
**While all the examples presented today feature either bridge or the neck pickup independently, another great option with Gibson-style two volumes and three-way selector switch wiring is to engage both pickups by positioning the toggle in the middle and balancing the ratio between treble (bridge) and bass (neck) with their respective volumes. The only thing to be wary of is to never reduce either completely to zero, unless you're after silence as this mutes the guitar completely. However Pete Townshend utilised this unusual property to great effect by turning the bridge pickup full up, with the neck completely off, switching the toggle rapidly between bridge and middle position to create a form of early 'kill' switch. Special effects aside, the main advantage to this blended volume method is a greater variety of combined tones, rather than the purely 50/50 split you would get with both levels set to maximum (try bridge pickup volume on 10 and neck on 7 for the 'Crosssroads' tone). You can create some interesting sounds by experimenting with the tone controls, too, so put some time aside to really familiarise yourself with how these variables interact and impact upon your tone. Happy exploring.**




### Get the Tone

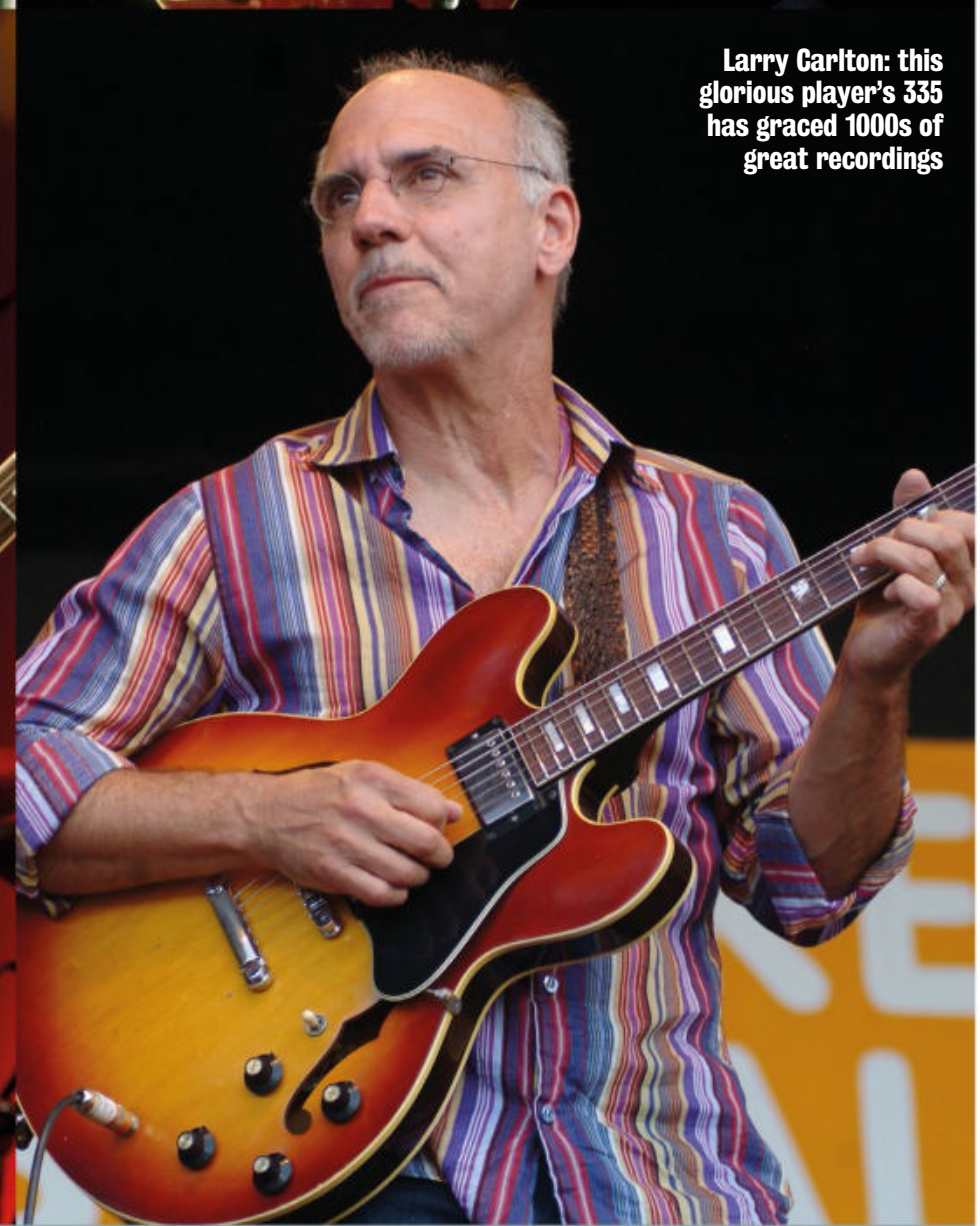
**While it would be ideal to always have a semi-solid at your disposal, these ideas will work on any decent electric. Remember to explore all pickup combinations and consider dialling in a moderately driven amp tone, turning down the volume slightly to clean things up and adding an overdrive for the raunchier examples. I used my ES-335 with Lindy Fralin PAFs into a modelled small tweed amp courtesy of a Line 6 Helix.**

Otis Rush: this great leftie was a huge influence on a young Clapton



Alvin Lee's amazing 335 licks brought the house down at Woodstock in 1969

Warren Haynes: this Southern rock giant is a veritable 335 powerhouse



Larry Carlton: this glorious player's 335 has graced 1000s of great recordings

**TRACK RECORD** Larry Carlton's compilation album, Mr.335, brims with exquisite playing and tone. Also consider Sco-Mule, a live CD featuring Warren Haynes and John Scofield on Gibson and Ibanez respectively. Exponents from the jazz world you must hear are Mike Walker (The Impossible Gentlemen), Mike Outram (Always A First Time – Martin Speake featuring Mike Outram), and Femi Temowo (Quiet Storm) .

LARRY HULST / TIM MOSENFELDER / STEVE THORNE / DAVID REDFERN / GETTY IMAGES

## FANTASY ES-335 ALL-STAR JAM

**[Bars 1-4]** We begin with some classic Chuck Berry double-stop action, neatly following our V7-IV- I7-V7 turnaround (D7-C7-G7-D7), introducing the first of many choruses around a mid-tempo blues shuffle in the key of G.

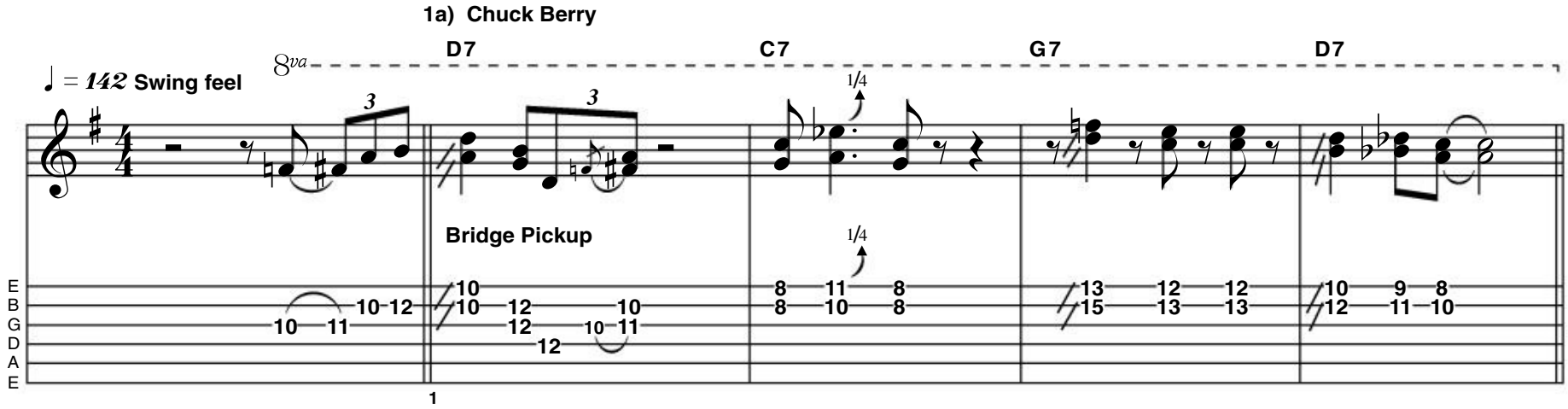
**[Bars 5-8]** Our first complete chorus starts with some classic BB King action, mixing elements of both Major and Minor. Consider these ideas more as declamatory statements, rather then more scale-derived melodic material.

**[Bars 9-12]** Here we're back to Chuck, with more double-stop vocabulary and a lovely raking sweep-picked idea in bar 11.

**[Bars 13-16]** Pay close attention to the intonation of your bending technique for the minor 3rd bend in bar 13. Make sure you're warmed up and let the forearm take the brunt of the heavy lifting, rather than just fingers alone.

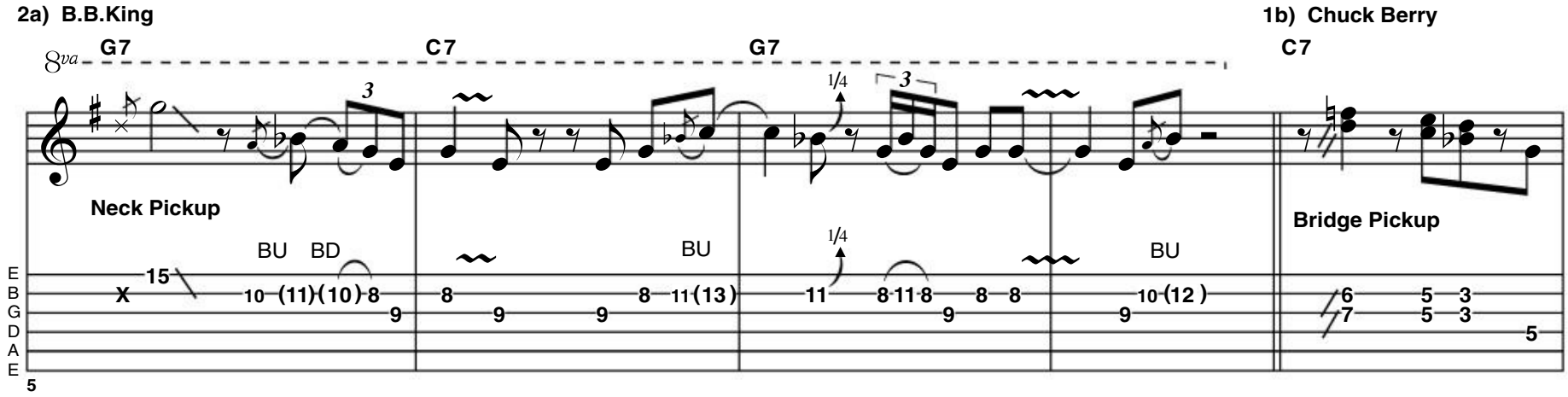
**[Bars 17-20]** Alvin Lee's rapid and fiery style features lots of repetitious cyclic phrases looped round and round and played at furious speeds. Try isolating each idea and work with a metronome to get things up to tempo.

1a) Chuck Berry

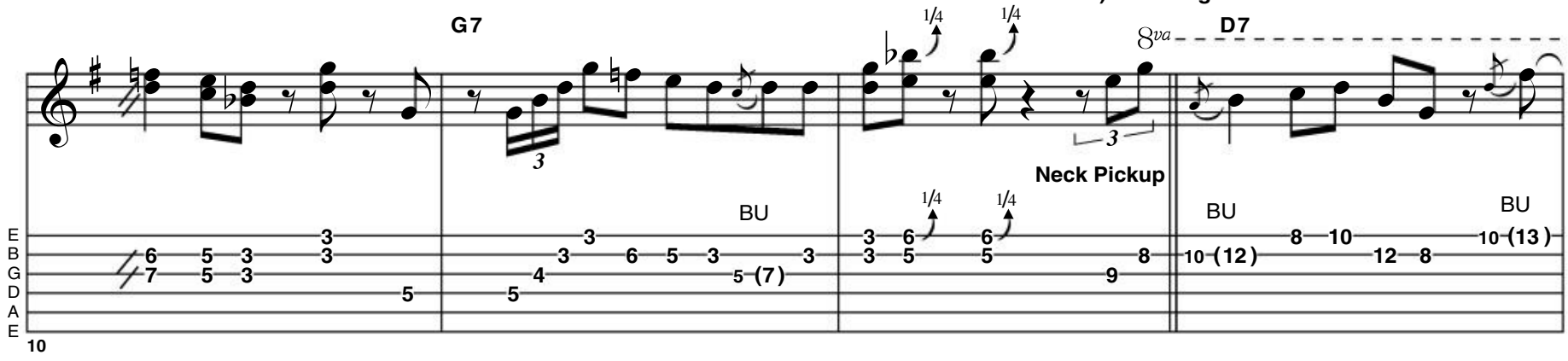



2a) B.B.King

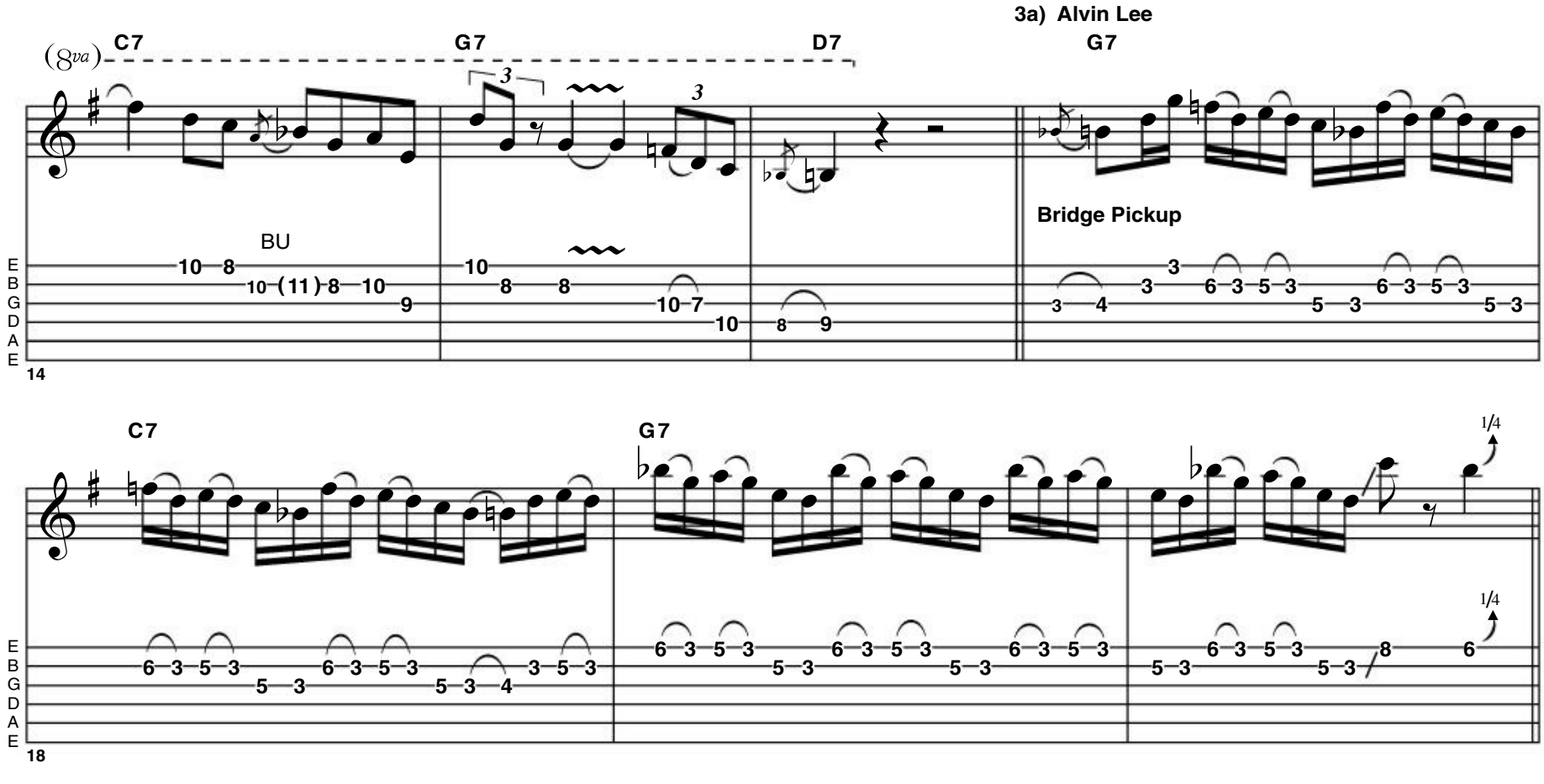
1b) Chuck Berry




2b) B.B.King




3a) Alvin Lee



## FANTASY ES-335 ALL-STAR JAM

**[Bars 21-24]** For our first Larry Carlton idea we're mixing both C (C-E-G) and B♭ (B♭-D-F) Major triads against our underlying C7 (C-E-G-B♭) harmony to imply C11. The remainder of this phrase is not dissimilar to BB King, in terms of note content and rhythmic phrasing, but the approach remains distinctly Larry's own..

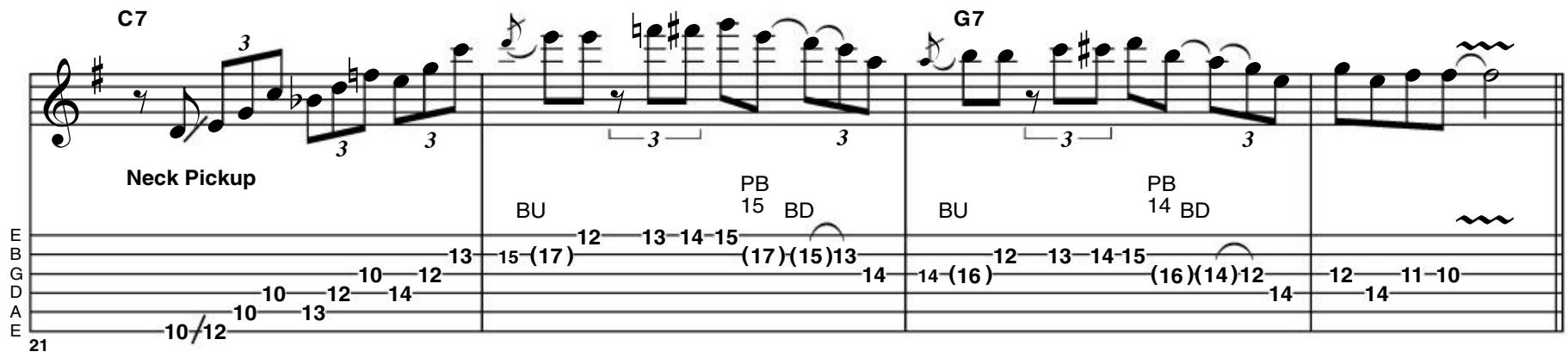
**[Bars 25-28]** Some classic rock and roll phrasing from Alvin Lee, again featuring repetition and Alvin's trademark intensity and fire.

**[Bars 29-32]** Pay close attention to the pre-bends in bar 29, definitely a Larry Carlton trademark. The trick is to bend the string without sounding it, pick while the bend is in place and then release the string back to its natural state, producing a pitch shift that goes down, rather than up.

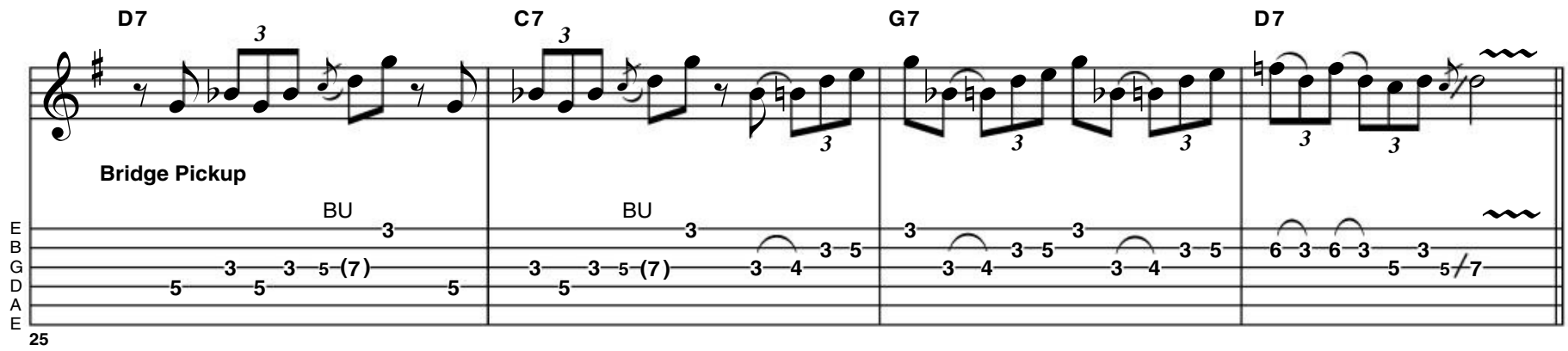
**[Bars 33-36]** Here we see a different kind of repetition and intensity courtesy of Irish blues-rock legend Gary Moore. Again, you might wish to isolate these ideas and work with your metronome to develop speed, accuracy and stamina.

**[Bars 37-40]** While it's possible to play the Warren Haynes inspired one-note-per-string idea in bar 37 purely with the pick, I opted to go for a pick-pick-finger approach, combining a downstroke-downstroke-second-finger hybrid pattern. You could also choose pick-second-third finger or elect to go for the purely fingerstyle route, so make sure you try every option to see what works for you.

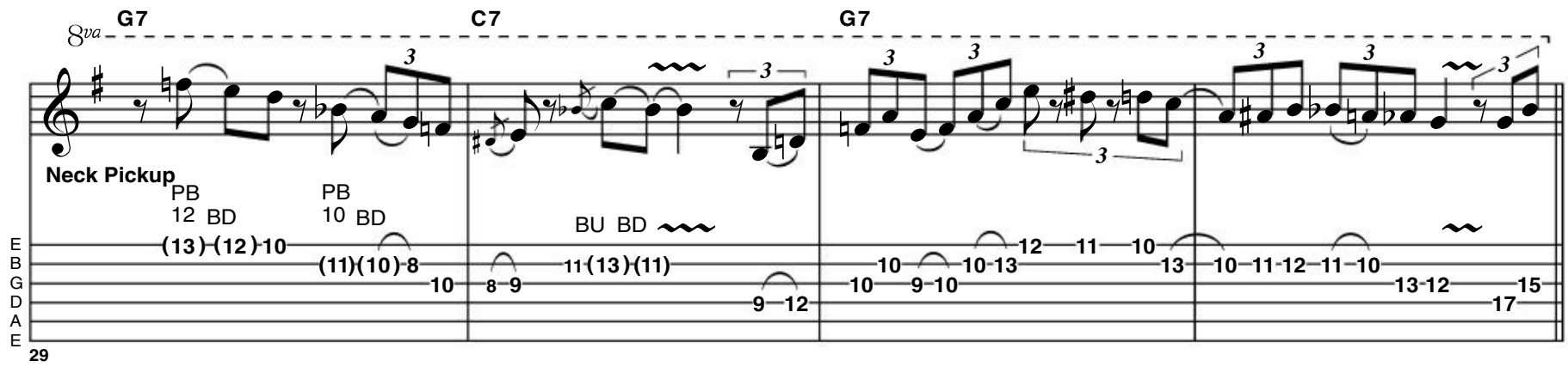
**4a) Larry Carlton**



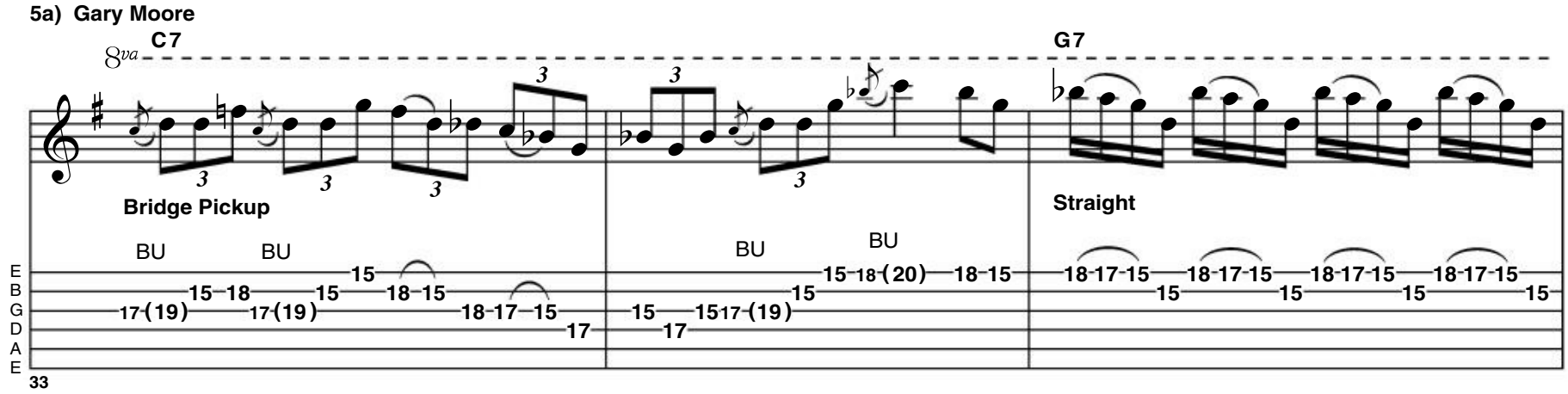

**3b) Alvin Lee**



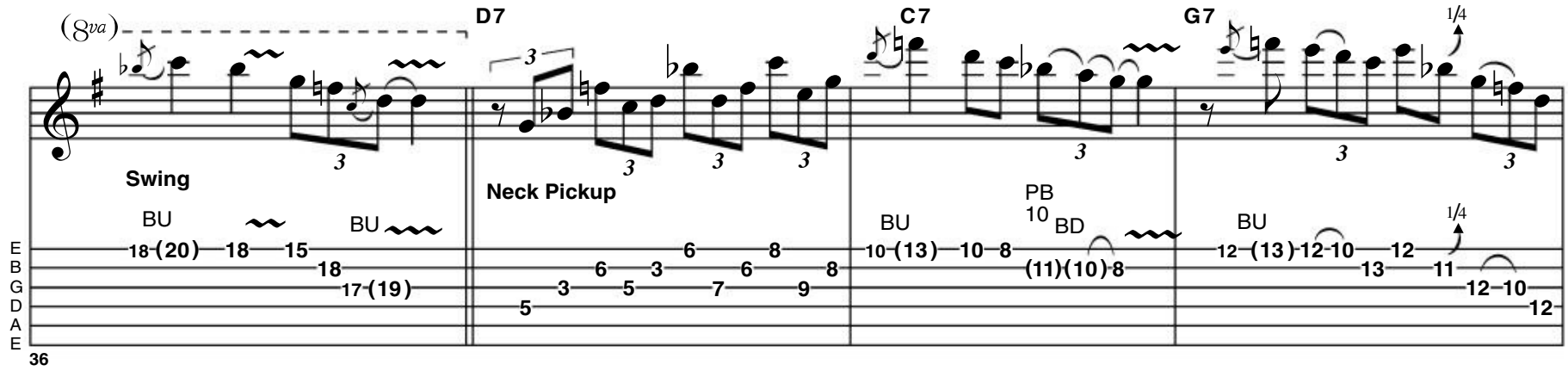

**4b) Larry Carlton**




**5a) Gary Moore**




**6a) Warren Haynes**



## FANTASY ES-335 ALL-STAR JAM

**[Bars 41-44]** We aim for a form of controlled chaos for the bends in bars 43-44, catching both first and second strings at the same time and allowing these notes to ring together to create an exciting and expressive emotive crying bend that evokes the spirit of Albert King but with Gary's added rock attitude and attack.

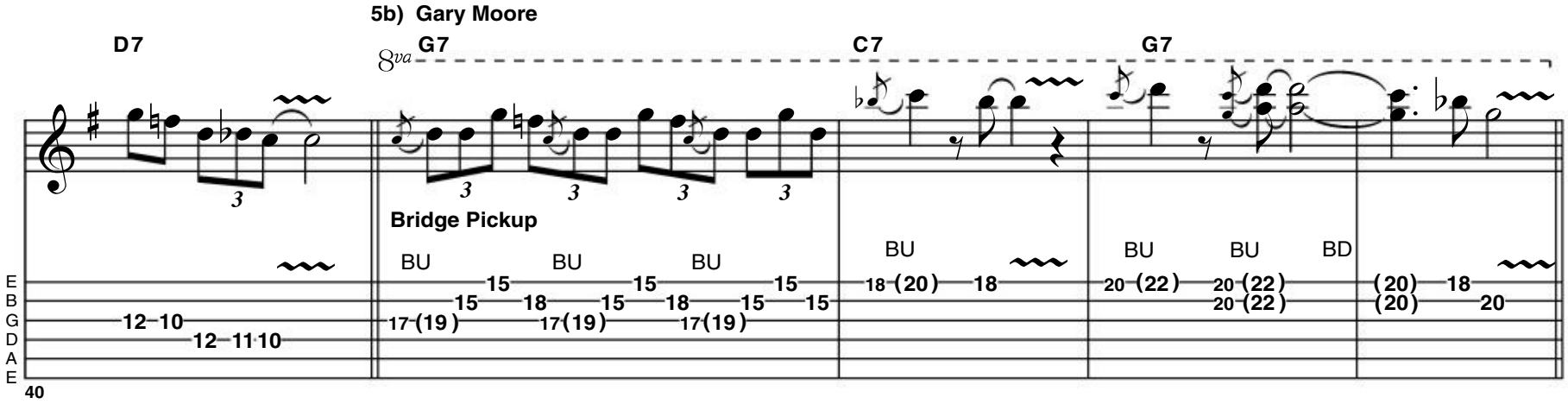
**[Bars 45-48]** This line mixes a repetitive Blues scale idea in G (G-B♭-C-D♭-D-F) with a jazzier sounding C Mixolydian idea (C-D-E-F-G-A-Bb) over the harmonically appropriate underlying C7 chord (C-E-G-B♭).

**[Bars 49-52]** At this point the baton is passed to Eric Johnson and we kick of with some superimposed open triad arpeggios against D7, namely D (D-F#-A), F# Diminished (F#-A-C) and A Minor (A-C-E). Bars 51 and 52 display a little of what Eric has taken from the mighty Jeff Beck, using both open strings and rapid semitone bends and releases.

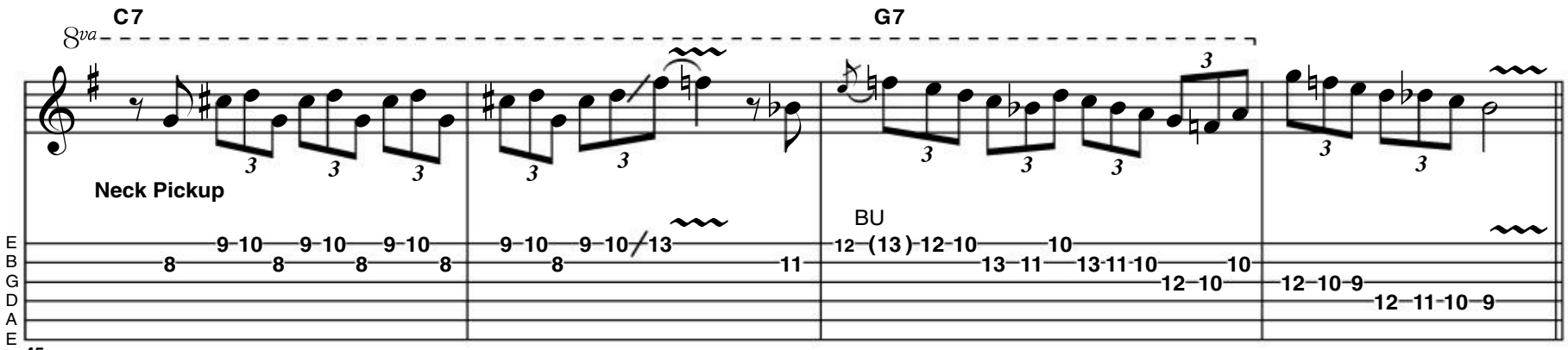
**[Bars 53-56]** Pick really close to the bridge if you'd like to get close to John Scofield's bite and attack. This phrase is derived from the G Blues scale (G-B♭-C-D♭-D-F) and makes quite a feature of the ♭5 note (D♭).

**[Bars 57-60]** You'll see two types of Pentatonic fives in bars 59-60; first we look at a cross-rhythmic five phrased in triplets in bar 59, and in bar 60 we'll see five notes crammed into a single beat to create a quintuplet rhythm.

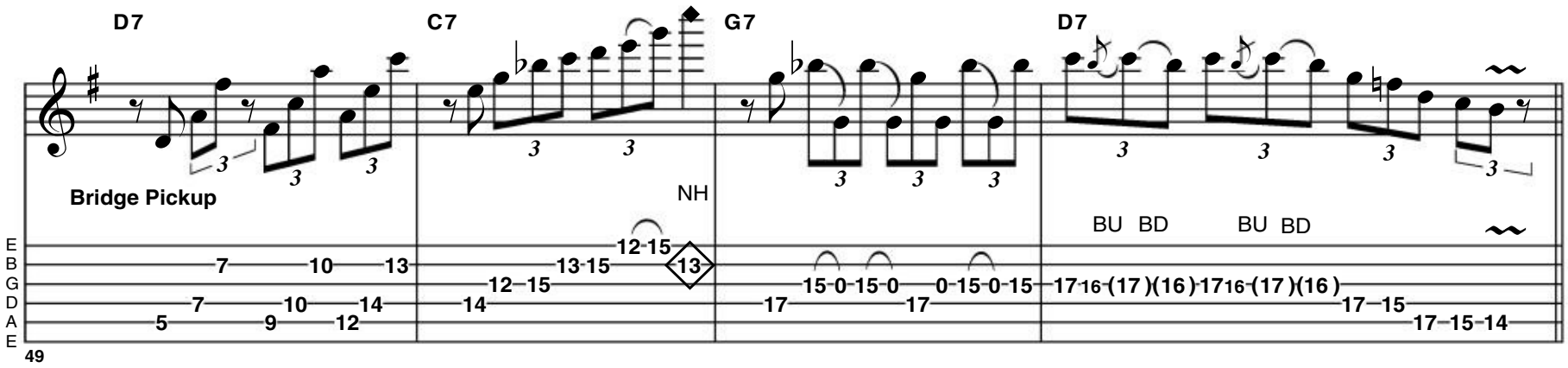
**5b) Gary Moore**



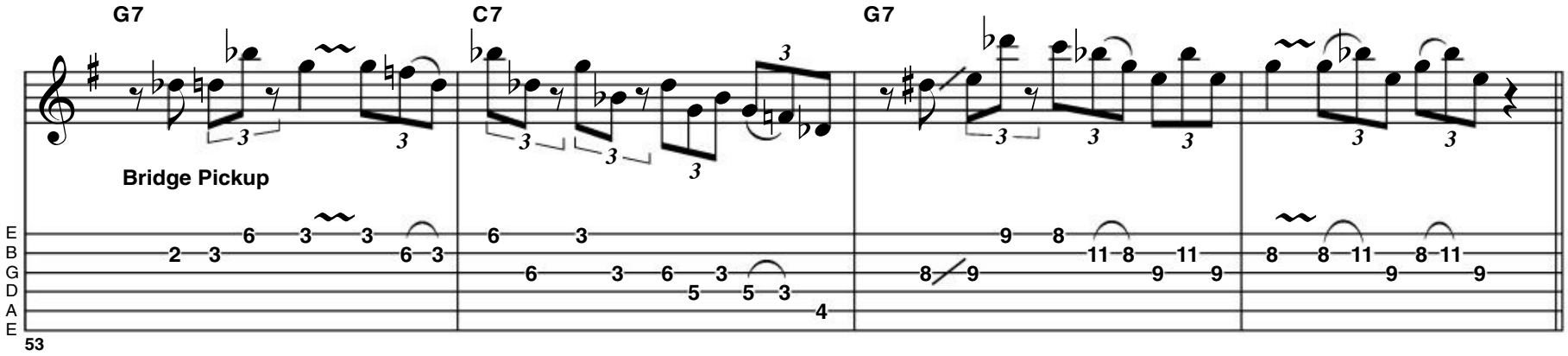

**6b) Warren Haynes**



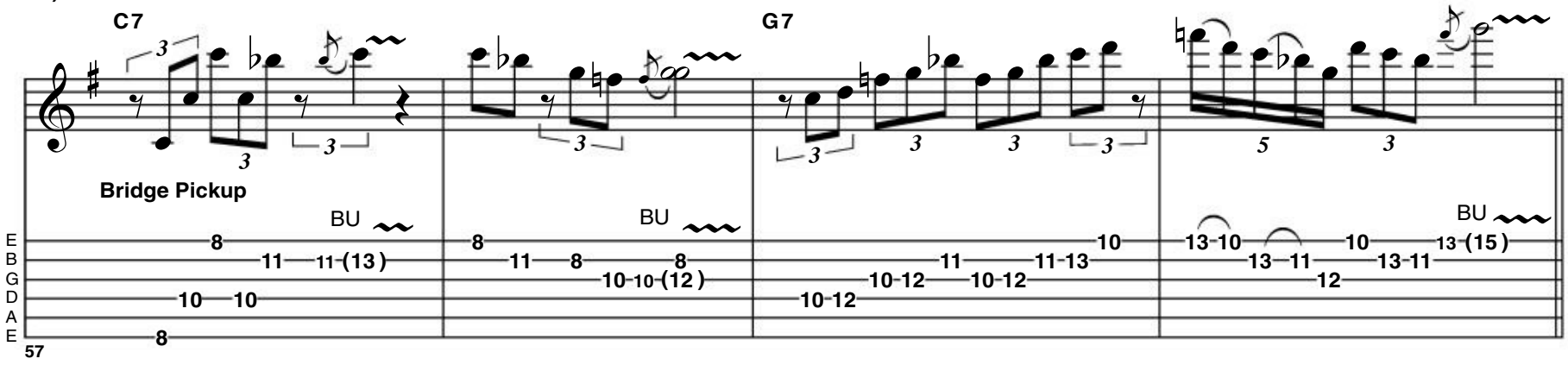

**7a) Eric Johnson**




**8b) John Scofield**



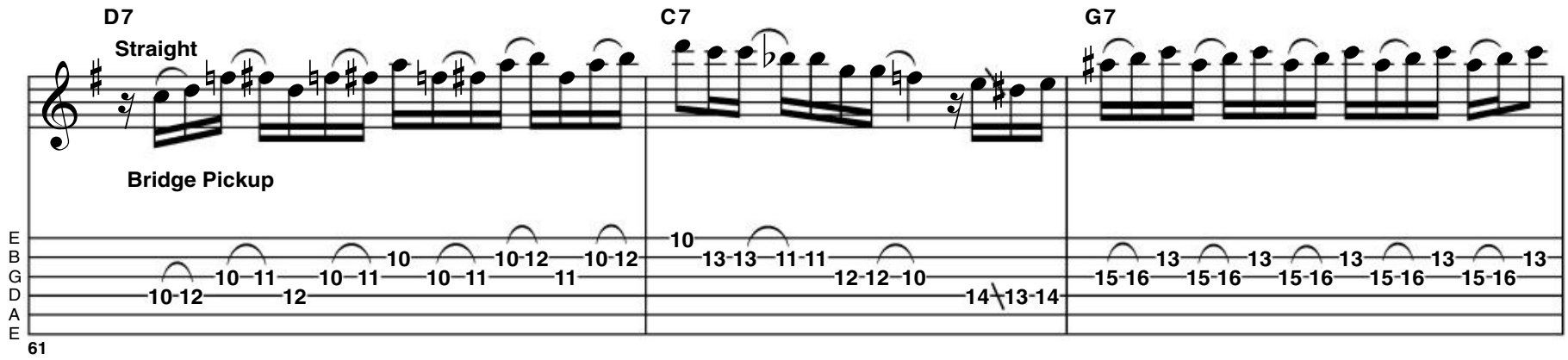

**7b) Eric Johnson**



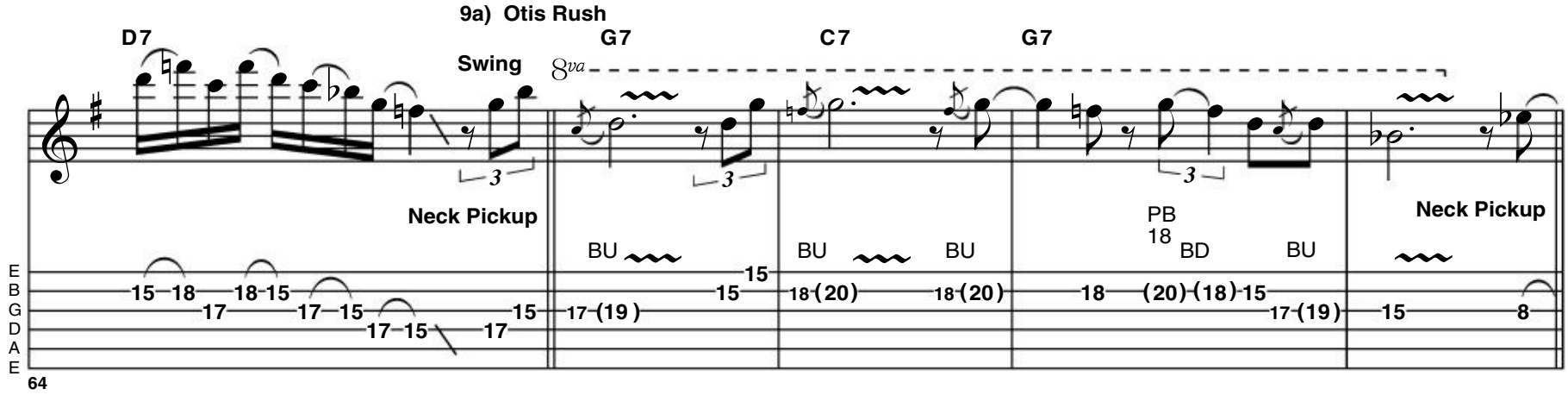
## FANTASY ES-335 ALL-STAR JAM

**[Bars 61-64]** Our second Sco phrase features some of the fastest playing in our solo. John is known for his laid-back feel and economic sense of phrasing, but he can really turn up the heat, so isolate these bars and work with your metronome.
**[Bars 65-68]** Although there is nothing too tricky here from a 'notes' perspective, as we're coming mainly from a G Minor Pentatonic direction (G-B♭-C-D-F), the sound of Otis Rush is all about the vibrato, so work on adding wide and singing vibrato.
**[Bars 69-72]** We can consider the phrases in bars 69 and 71 to be a hybrid of the underlying 7th arpeggios - C7 (C-E-G-B♭) and G7 (G-B-D-F), along with the bluesy additional Minor 3rd in each case (for C7 it's E♭ and for G7 it's B♭).
**[Bars 73-76]** More simple but beautiful bending action from Otis here. Remember that like Albert King, Otis was a leftie who played his guitar strung upside-down, so he pulls rather than pushes these bends.
**[Bars 77-80]** We round things up with some classic Clapton moves, again with nothing too difficult or surprising from a notes perspective, but take the opportunity to really polish your tone, timing, bending, vibrato and general delivery and execution to make things sound as glorious as Eric.

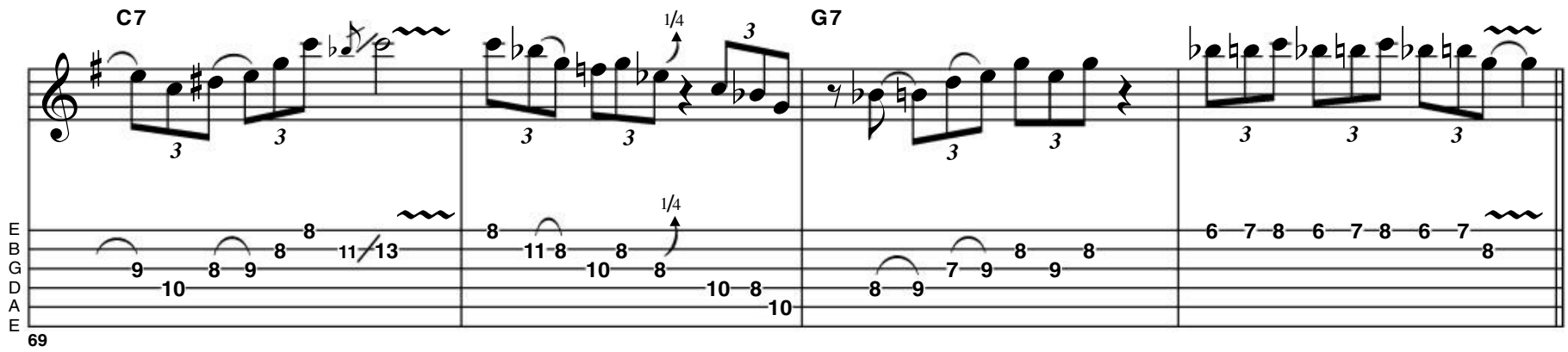
**8b) John Scofield**



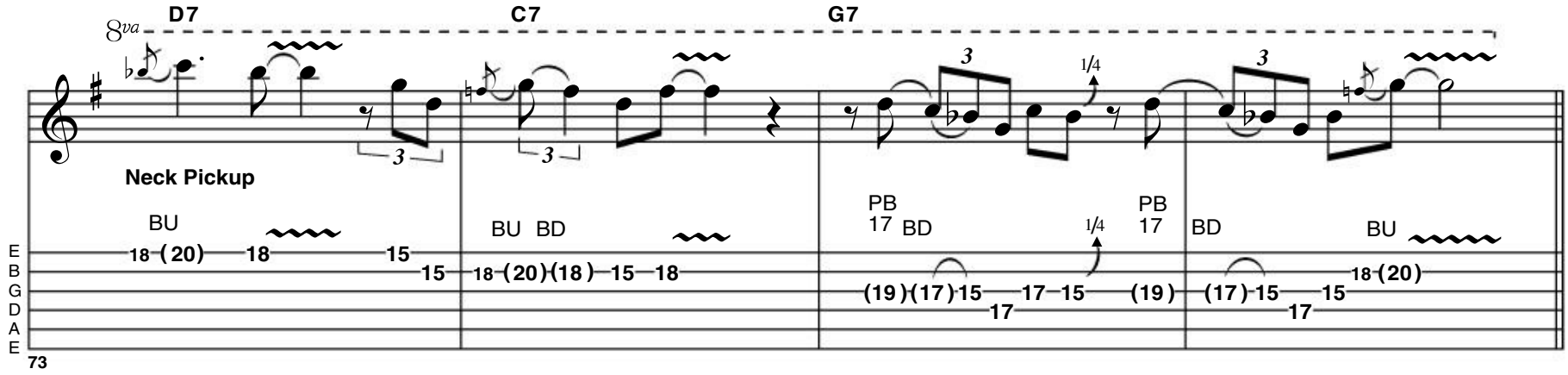

**9a) Otis Rush**



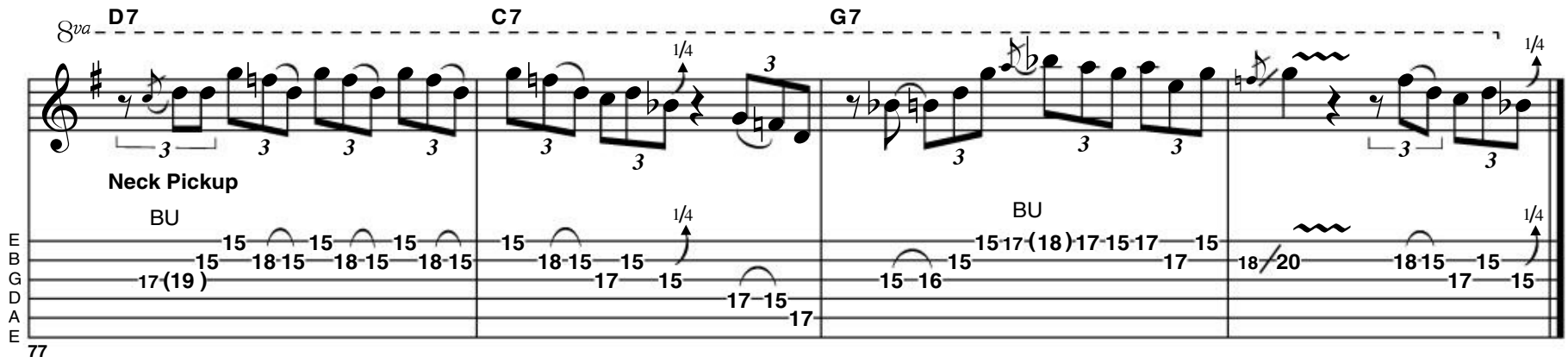

**10a) Eric Clapton**




**9b) Otis Rush**




**10b) Eric Clapton**



ON VIDEO

# JOHANN STRAUSS II
# Pizzicato Polka Op. 234

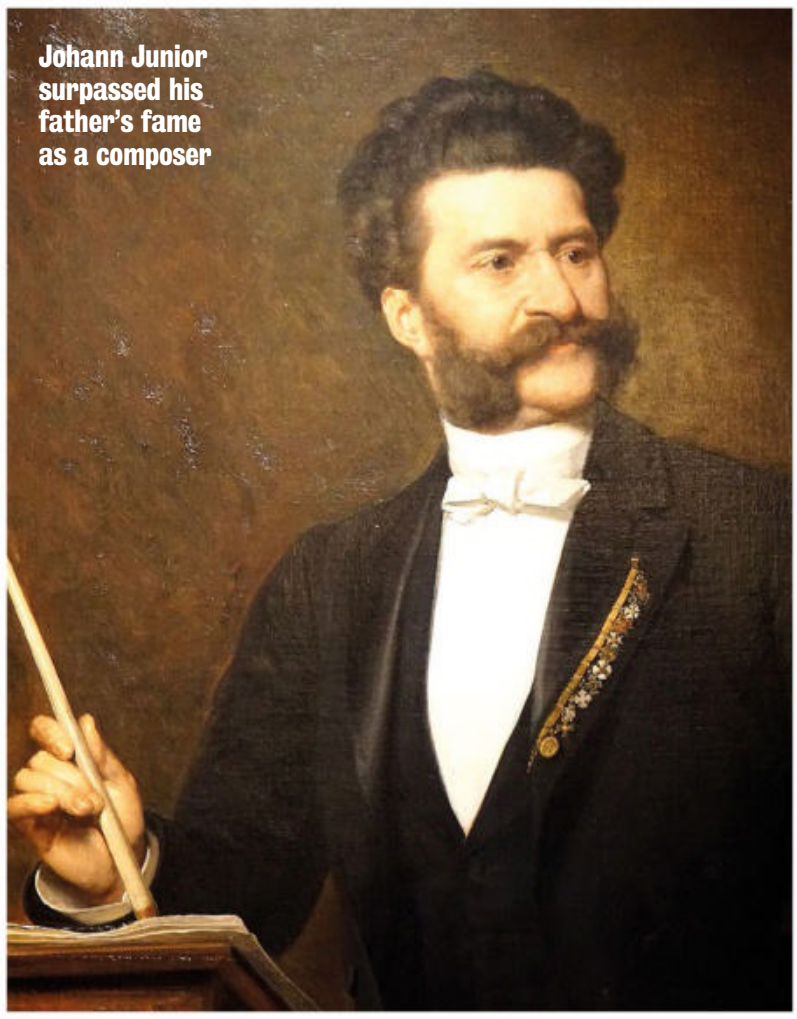
**Declan Zapala** takes us to 19th-century Vienna with his arrangement of this upbeat and cheeky Polka from the King of Waltz (and King of Polka!) Johann Strauss II.

**ABILITY RATING** Moderate ★★★☆☆

**Info** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul
**Key** C **Tempo** 60-200bpm

**Will improve your...**
✔ Pizzicato technique
✔ Two-part melodic independence ✔ Open-chord fretting and shifting

The 19th-century composer Johann Strauss II (aka Johann Jr) hailed from a family of prolific composers who were central figures in the popularisation of the Viennese waltz. Together, the Strauss family elevated the Viennese waltz from a simple peasant dance into something everyone all the way through to high society could enjoy. The Strauss 'power family' consisted of Johann Strauss Sr and his three sons: Josef, Eduard, and their eldest brother Johann Jr. Today Strauss Sr is perhaps most famous for 'the Radetzky March' which he was commissioned to write to commemorate Field Marshal Radetzky's victory at the Battle of Custoza, but it is no secret that he in fact refused to allow any of his sons to follow in his footsteps as a musician and composer - he wanted Johann Jr to work in banking, and Josef in the military, but all three sons were defiant and studied music in various forms without his knowledge or blessing. They ended up musical rivals to their father which was a story that the media very much enjoyed playing up to at the time.



Johann Junior surpassed his father's fame as a composer

Johann Jr was a musical prodigy from the get-go. He studied violin and composition without his father's knowledge and in 1844, at the ripe old age of 18, started his own dance orchestra to rival his father's and gained instant popularity in Vienna. After his father's passing in 1849 he amalgamated the two Strauss orchestras into one and toured the world, carrying the torch for them both. Johann Jr had a long and fruitful musical career and wrote a vast body of orchestral suites, ballets, and operettas. He composed over 500 dances and 150 of these were waltzes, which gained him his accolade 'the King of Waltz'. His famous waltz, The Blue Danube, opens Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey and his music is still performed extensively in concerts worldwide today. As well as being the King of Waltz, Strauss Jr was also the King of Polka since this is another dance form that can be found in abundance throughout his repertoire. This month's arrangement is possibly his most well-known Polka, written in collaboration with his brother and fellow composer Josef as a catchy standalone piece for a concert in St Petersburg in 1869. The piece was so well received on its opening night that it was played no less than nine times and it has maintained its popularity ever since.

> *"Johann Jr was a musical prodigy from the get-go. He studied violin and composition without his father's knowledge"*

**NEXT MONTH** *Declan arranges the superb Dance Of The Miller by* ***Manuel de Falla***

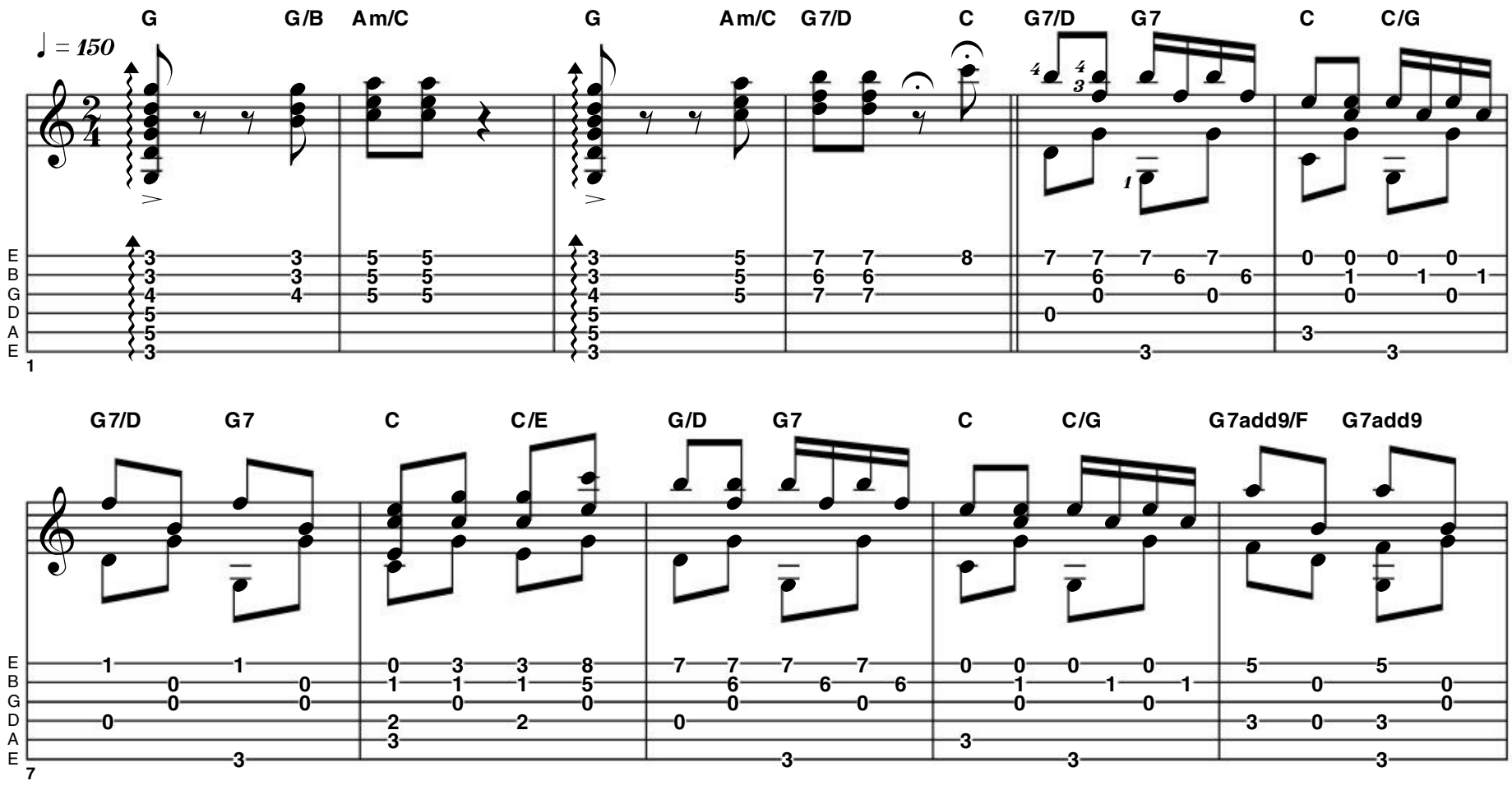
## TECHNIQUE FOCUS
### A String Orchestra Inside Your Guitar

To sound effective this piece requires a mute to be placed under the strings at the bridge (a rolled up sock will do!). This emulates the signature pizzicato sound for which the original string orchestra version is famous. As guitarists this presents an opportunity for ease of playing. Muted notes have very little sustain, meaning there is no need to hold notes much past their initial pluck. Ultimately this piece should feel light to play in the fretting hand since we release all notes immediately, so if you find that isn't the case then practise seeing how little pressure you can get away with!

**TRACK RECORD** Due to the pandemic the BBC concert orchestra performed Pizzicato Polka to an empty Royal Albert Hall as part of the Proms 2020. A video of this can be found on the BBC Music YouTube channel. Violinist André Rieu founded the Johann Strauss Orchestra and a great version of Pizzicato Polka can be found on his album André Rieu: und die Wunderwelt der Strauss-Dynastie (Delta Music: 2015).

## PLAYING TIPS

**'THOSE' CHORDS** You may have spotted by now that the chords in bars 51 and 59 are really quite wide (sorry!). Fear not for if, like me, you aren't blessed with Rachmaninoff-sized hands they are still very much playable - the trick is to approach them in two steps. First, just before you shift up to the first chord, open up your first and second fingers, then place first, second and third fingers onto their notes at the same time. The second step is to then extend the fourth finger out to its note. If you have trouble with the second step, focus on how light you can hold those three fingers and that should loosen up the fourth finger.



## PLAYING TIPS

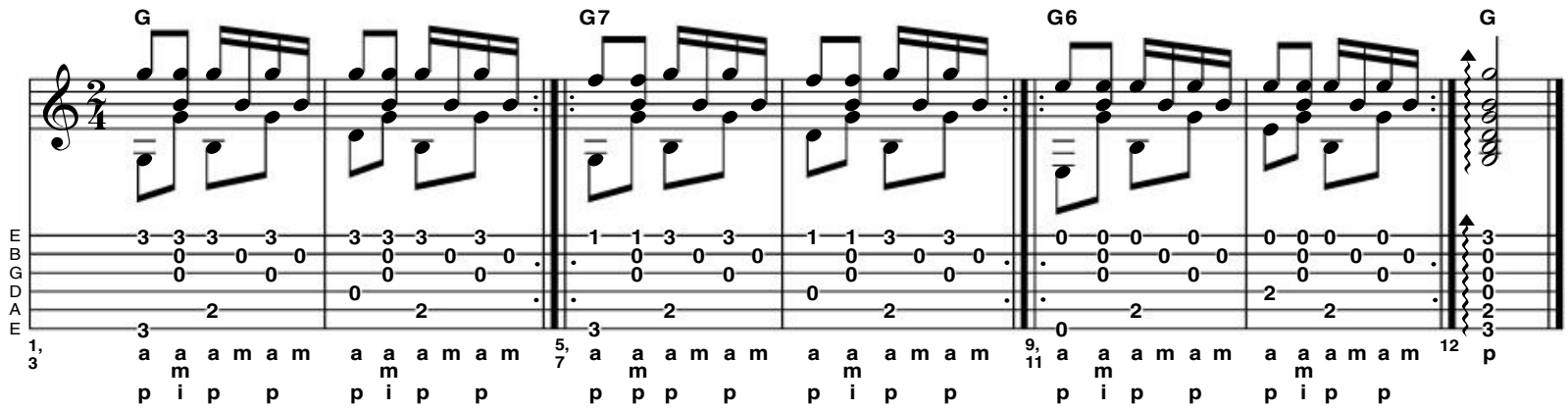
**DESCENDING DIMINISHED CHORDS** If you only look at the music, bars 53-54 and 61-62 seem quite complex. However, the good news is they consist mainly of a single Diminished chord shape that descends chromatically down the frets. Holding the two chords that immediately precede the first Diminished chord with your third and fourth fingers will allow you to seamlessly flow into the full Diminished chords.

## PLAYING TIPS

## PLAYING TIPS

## EXERCISE 1 MASTERING THE POLKA OPENING THEME

The opening polka theme has an upper melody that zig-zags between adjacent strings, with an Alberti-esque bass pattern underneath. Given the technical dimension to these bars in the picking hand, it's really worth practising them by focusing on a chosen finger pattern. I recommend you adopt my fingerings in this exercise since it means this section can all be plucked from a single hand position. Economy of effort is a wonderful thing.

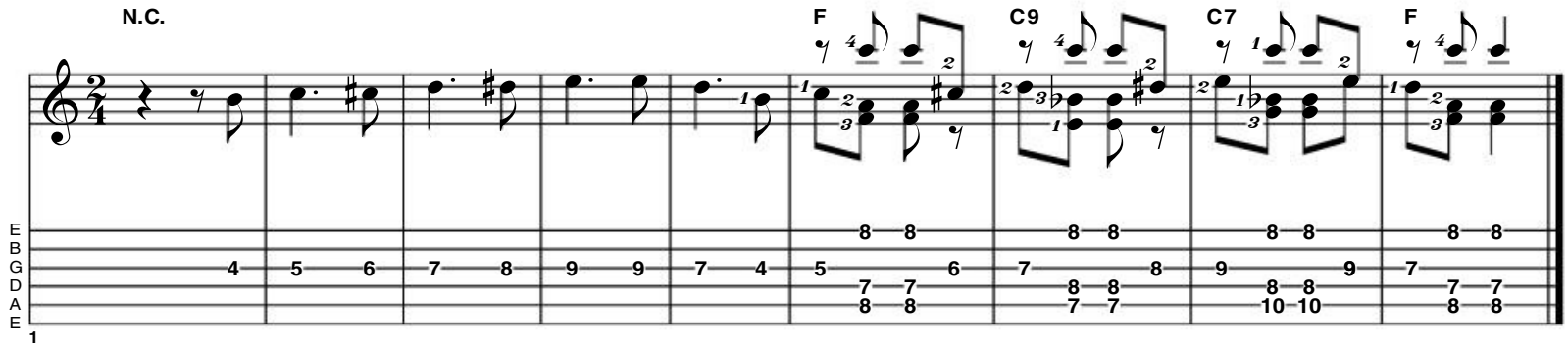



## EXERCISE 2 WIDE CHORD SHIFTS

Sometimes we can be squeezing a chord during a shift without realising, which not only prevents a speedy and nimble chord shift but carries tension in the fretting hand from one chord to another. Keep a nice relaxed open spread in your fretting hand by keeping the thumb positioned vertically low. When approaching each shift feel the fretting hand thumb loosen off slightly so that there is little friction preventing the movement of the shift.

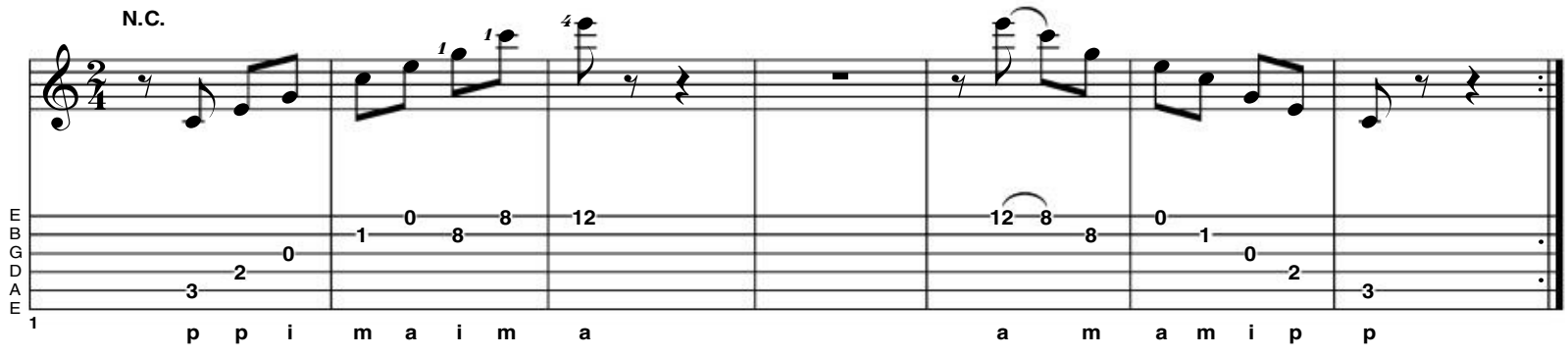
## EXERCISE 3 PRACTISING THE INNER VOICING FROM BARS 33-36

In bar 33 the piece modulates to the key of F Major at which point a cheeky chromatic inner voice ascends and descends the third string. Getting the positioning of the surrounding chords clean can be a little tricky at first so it is well worth practising this passage in isolation, slowly. As you approach each chord keep the melody note held down as this will help stabilise the fretting hand as you quickly build the chord around it. Don't forget these are muted notes so you don't need to hold the pressure on for any chords once they have been plucked. Keep that fretting hand nice and empty!



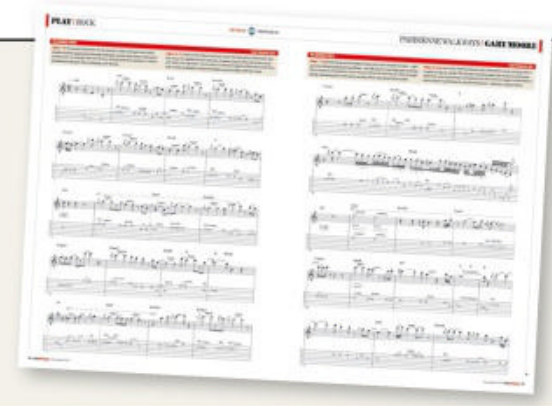

## EXERCISE 4 THE FINAL CROSS-STRING ARPEGGIOS

This piece ends with a fiery cross-string C Major arpeggio that comes right before the strummed C Major chords. Practising the arpeggio in both forward and reverse directions will build great confidence for when you get to these bars. One tip I give all my pupils is to make the final bars of a piece the most practised of all the bars, since more often than not the end of a piece contains the most musically developed (and therefore complex) material. Therefore having the most challenging bars proprly nailed makes for a much more confident performance overall. Remember to remove the sock for your next piece!



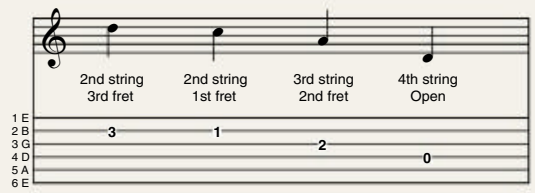
# GT USER GUIDE

You can get more from GT by understanding our easy-to-follow musical terms and signs...



## READ MUSIC

Each transcription is broken down into two parts...



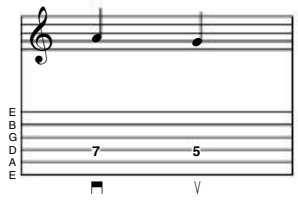

**MUSICAL STAVE**
The five horizontal lines for music notation show note pitches and rhythms and are divided by bar lines.

**TAB** Under the musical stave, Tab is an aid to show you where to put your fingers on the fretboard. The six horizontal lines represent the six strings on a guitar – the numbers on the strings are fret numbers.

## GUITAR TECHNIQUES: HOW THEY APPEAR IN WRITTEN MUSIC...

### PICKING

#### Up and down picking

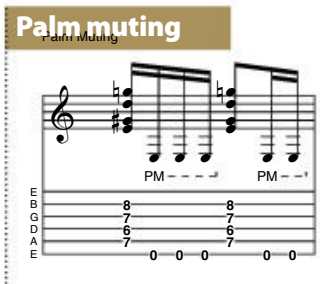


■ The first note is to be down-picked and the last note is to be up-picked.

#### Tremolo picking

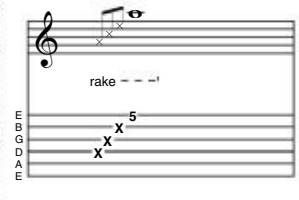
■ Each of the four notes are to be alternate picked (down- & up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

#### Palm muting




■ Palm mute by resting the edge of picking-hand's palm on the strings near the bridge.

#### Pick rake



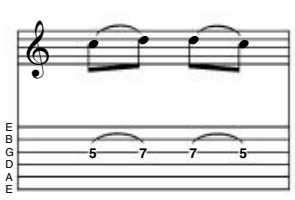

■ Drag the pick across the strings shown with a single sweep. Often used to augment a rake's last note.

#### Appeggiate chord

■ Play the notes of the chord by strumming across the relevant strings in the direction of the arrow head.

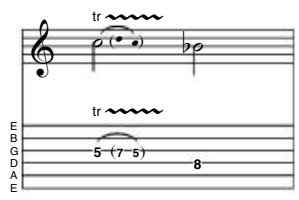
### FRETTING HAND

#### Hammer-on & Pull-off



■ Pick 1st note and hammer on with fretting hand for 2nd note. Then pick 3rd note and pull off for 4th note.

#### Note Trills

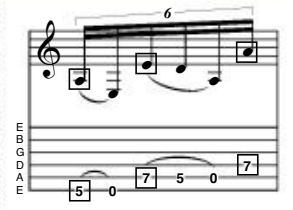



■ Rapidly alternate between the two notes indicated in brackets with hammer-ons and pull-offs.

#### Slides (Glissando)

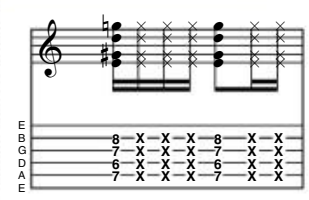
■ Pick 1st note and slide to the 2nd note. The last two notes show a slide with the last note being re-picked.

#### Left Hand Tapping



■ Sound the notes marked with a square by hammering on/tapping with the fretting-hand fingers.

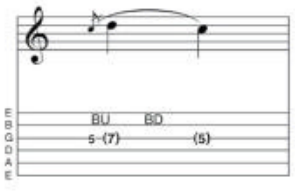
#### Fret-Hand Muting



■ X markings represent notes muted by the fretting hand when struck by the picking hand.

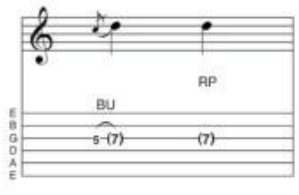
### BENDING AND VIBRATO

#### Bend up/down



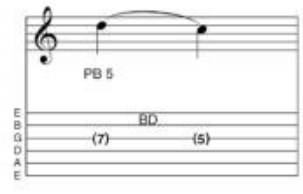

■ Fret the start note (here, the 5th fret) and bend up to the pitch of the bracketed note, before releasing.

#### Re-pick bend




■ Bend up to the pitch shown in the brackets, then re-pick the note while holding the bent note at the new pitch.

#### Pre bend




■ Bend up from the 5th fret to the pitch of the 7th fret note, then pick it and release to 5th fret note.

#### Quarter-tone bend

■ Pick the note and then bend up a quarter tone (a very small amount). Sometimes referred to as blues curl.

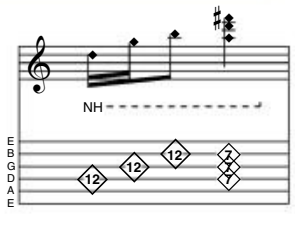
### CAPO

#### Capo Notation

■ A capo creates a new nut, so the above example has the guitar's 'literal' 5th fret now as the 3rd fret.

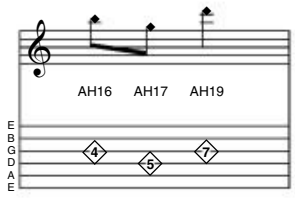
### HARMONICS

#### Natural harmonics



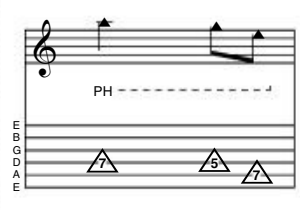

■ Pick the note while lightly touching the string directly over the fret indicated. A harmonic results.

#### Artificial harmonics



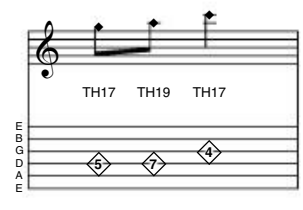

■ Fret the note as shown, then lightly place the index finger over 'x' fret (AH 'x') and pick (with a pick, p or a).

#### Pinched harmonics




■ Fret the note as shown, but dig into the string with the side of the thumb as you sound it with the pick.

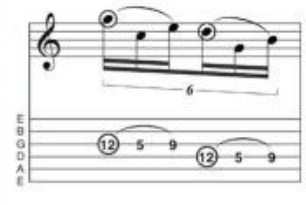
#### Tapped harmonics




■ Fret the note as shown, but sound it with a quick right-hand tap at the fret shown (TH17) for a harmonic.

### R/H TAPPING

#### Right-hand tapping



■ Tap (hammer-on) with a finger of the picking hand onto the fret marked with a circle. Usually with 'i' or 'm'.

# GT LESSONS

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# JASON INTRODUCES...

As you will have read, this is Neville Marten's last issue as GT's editor. He has had quite a journey with this magazine since he started it alongside Phil Hilborne in 1994, with (almost) countless lessons, interviews and writers flowing through his editorship. So it is with a degree of sadness to see him step down from the Big Chair but, that said, I'm very happy he's still onboard for subbing articles and doing interviews, helping the team and me to continue making the greatest guitar tutorial magazine in the world. I mean, where else can a guitarist get access to professionally curated classical music, blues licks, genre-hopping features, player analysis, and theory and technique focused tuition in print? Let alone for a pint or two of beer each month?

This issue is no different - what about that huge 'love letter' to the world's most admired instrumental rock artist, Joe Satriani? I began asking artists for quotes before last Christmas, and did the big Q&A with Joe nearly three months ago. Only then did I ask Jamie Humphries to go all-out on his video appraisal of Long Island's Legato Legend. It's highly unlikely you will find this depth and breadth anywhere else. As for John Wheatcroft's unique viewpoint of Allan Holdsworth for mere mortals, and Declan Zapala's gorgeous rendition of Johann Strauss's Pizzicato Polka, they're totally opposite in content and appeal but still at the highest levels of guitar tuition. For the remainder of the issue, we've short licks, blues, rock, shred, reggae, gypsy jazz, acoustic country and jazz-blues licks. Again, super broad and always focused on brilliant, vibrant guitarists and fantastic playing. We've always been this way and always will. Until the next issue, keep happy, keep listening and keep playing!

Jason

## IN LESSONS GT #335

**BLUES** ..... 54

**Phil Short looks at one of the most fabled periods of Eric Clapton's career. The legendary Goodbye Cream era.**

**ROCK** ..... 58

**Martin Cooper checks out Nita Strauss who earned her stripes on the touring scene, and currently plays with the great Alice Cooper.**

# 30-MINUTE LICKBAG

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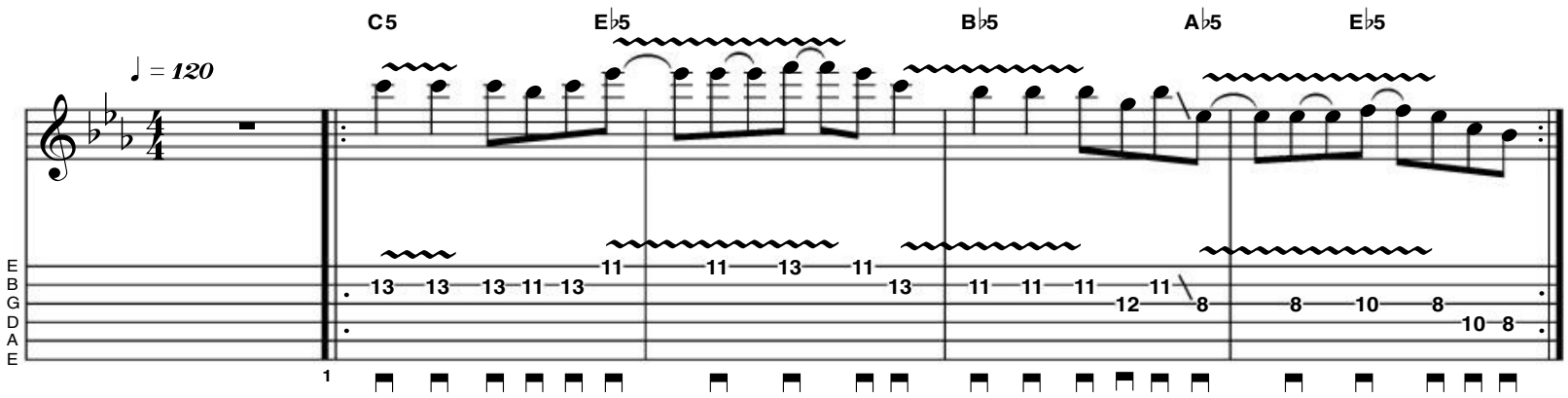
## EXAMPLE 1 EASY LICKS **SERGIO PIZZORNO**

This Kasabian style exercise uses C Minor Pentatonic scale to establish a strong melodic theme. Bars 1 and 3 focus on phrasing from the downbeats within the bar, whereas bars 2 and 4 shift to notes played on the '&' of each beat. To add expression, apply vibrato to each sustained note within the phrase. For the sound, select your bridge pickup, set your amp to a slightly driven tone and add a fuzz pedal. This achieves a warm, gritty sound and enhances the sustain on the longer notes.

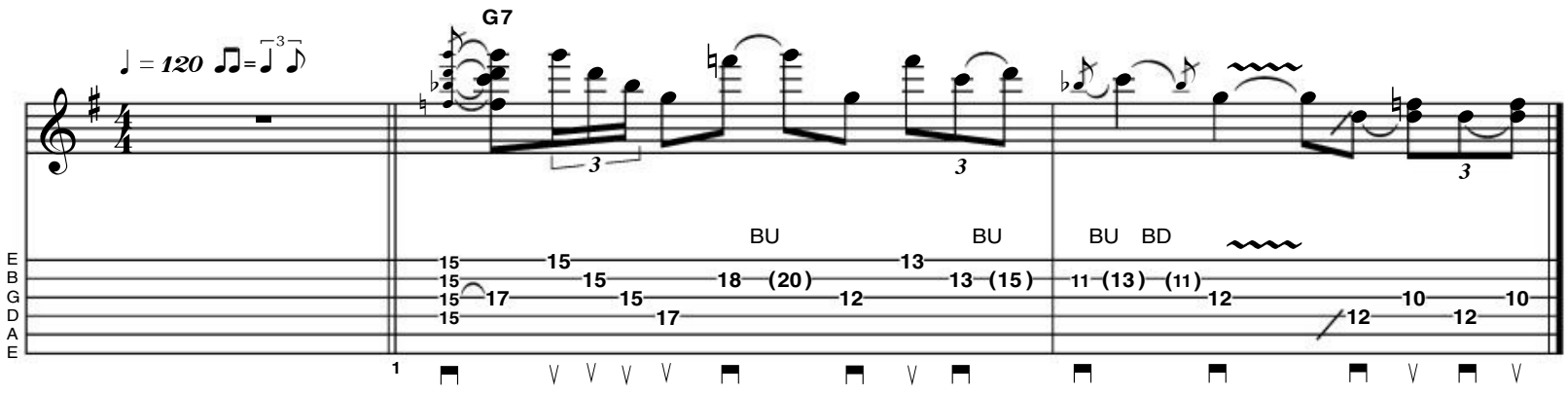



## EXAMPLE 2 EASY LICKS **JOE PERRY**

This riff uses short, staccato notes. This creates strong defined pitches and allows the space between the notes to become a part of the groove. Use fretting-hand muting to keep your notes brief. This is achieved by relaxing your fretting finger after each note. The reduced finger pressure will stop the notes from ringing and so acts as a natural string mute. To get the right sound, use your bridge pickup, set your amp to a medium gain level and add reverb.

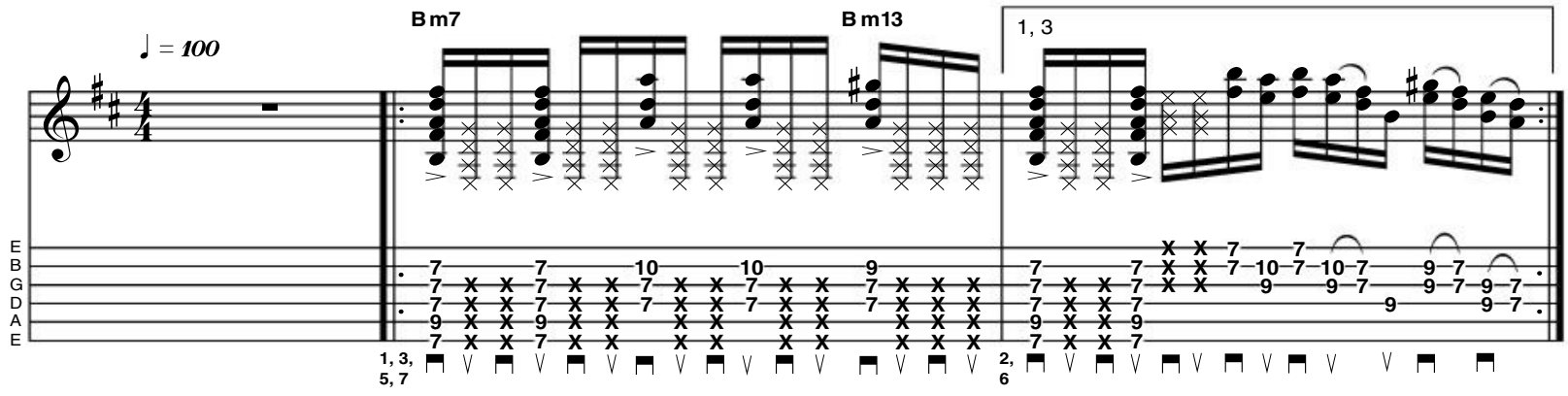
## EXAMPLE 3 INTERMEDIATE LICKS **WARREN HAYNES**

This opening phrase is based around a Gm7 chord and includes a hammer-on and a rake down the chord. Haynes uses quickfire lines like this to create energy while emulating the phrasing of key blues players. With the string bends, make sure you add support from multiple fretting fingers to help each bend reach the intended pitch. Haynes often uses the pickup selector's middle position for note definition and warmth. Use medium amp gain, boost the treble and mids, then add some reverb.



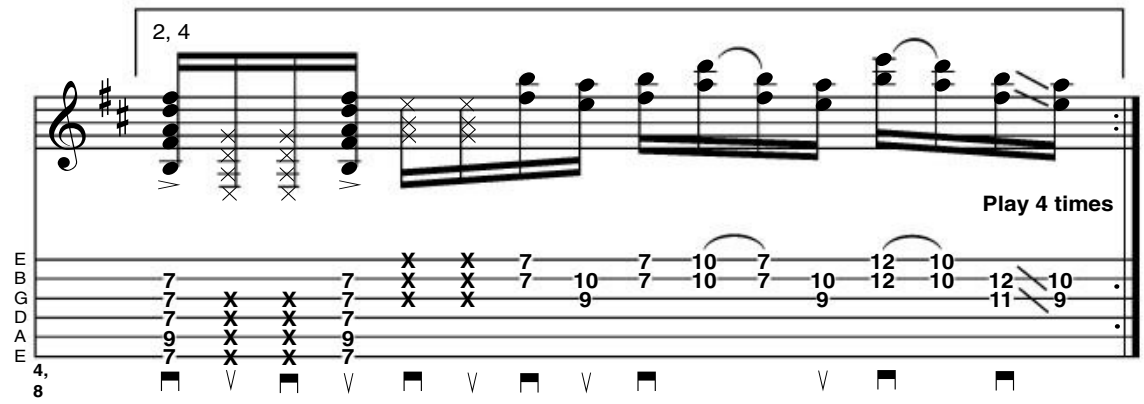

## EXAMPLE 4 INTERMEDIATE LICKS **JAIRUS MOZEE**

For this16th-note groove on Bm7 and Bm13 chords, Pentatonic double-stops during the fills create harmonised lead lines. Apply equal finger pressure across both notes, and use the underside of your first finger to mute the treble strings while the tip of your fretting fingers mute lower strings. For the tone, use the neck pickup and roll off some tone. Set the amp to clean and add a compressor if you have one, to smooth out the dynamic range. This helps the nuances of the groove to cut through.



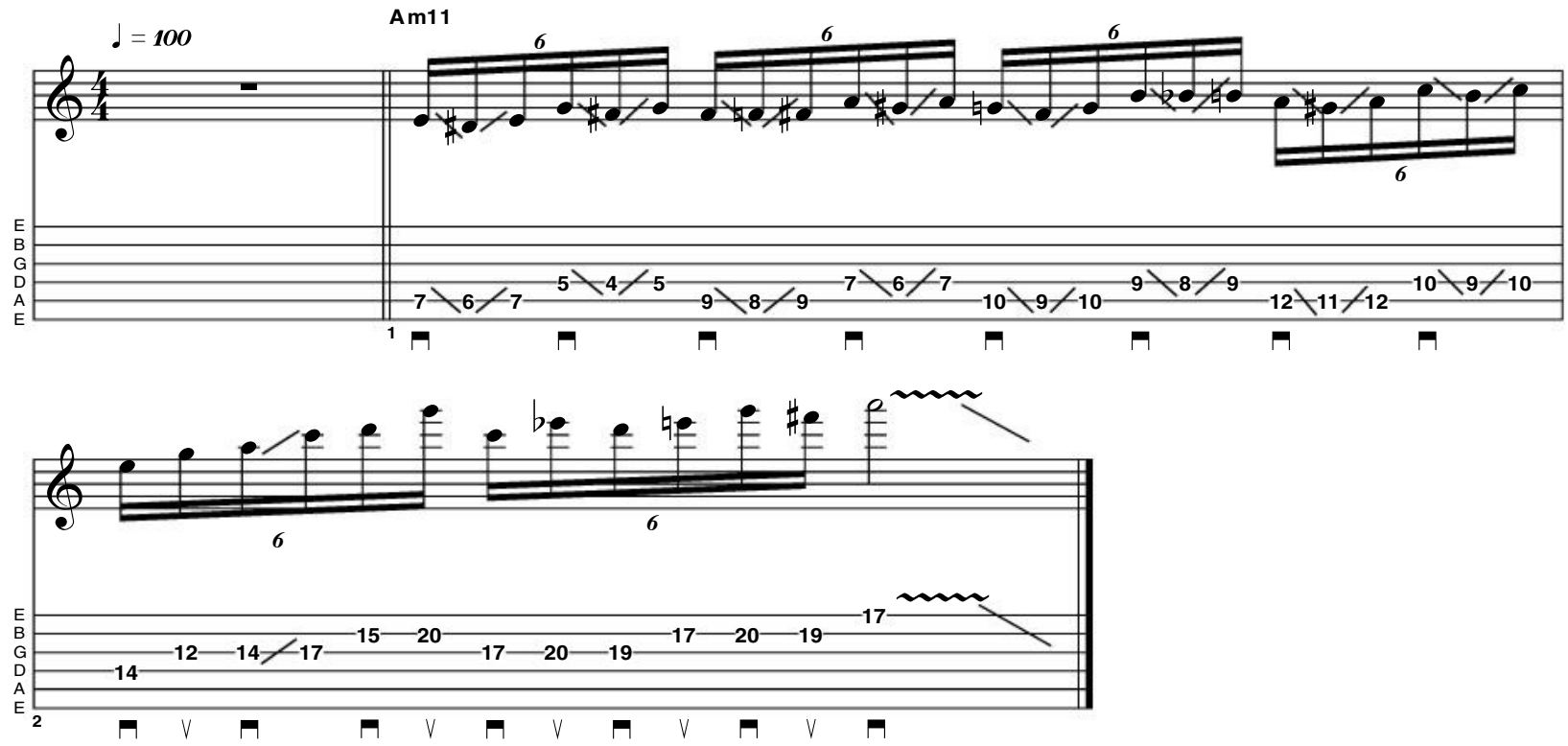
**Jamie Hunt** of BIMM Bristol brings you another eclectic clutch of licks to learn at easy, intermediate and advanced levels.

## EXAMPLE 4 INTERMEDIATE LICKS **JAIRUS MOZEE** ...CONTINUED



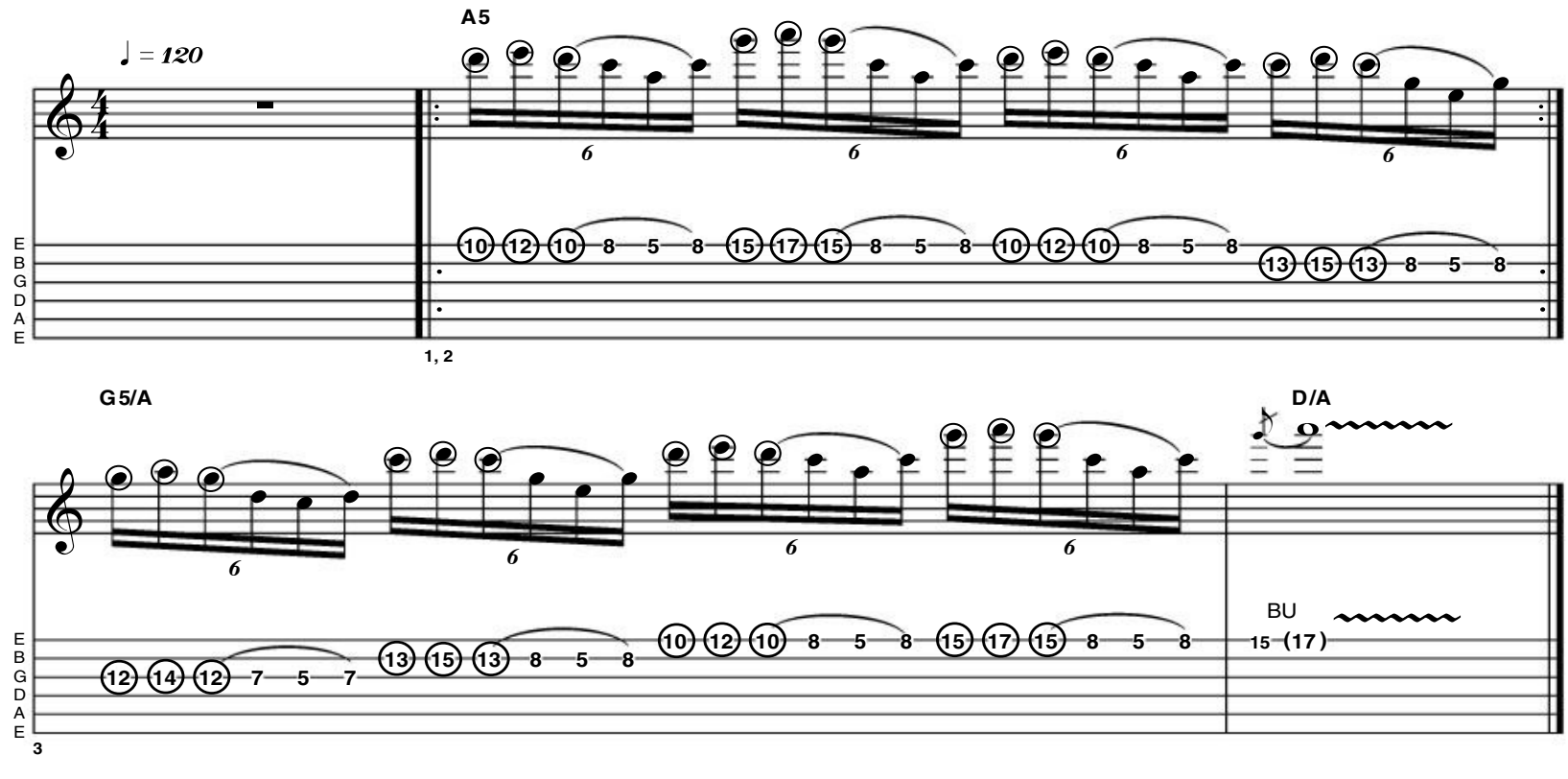

## EXAMPLE 5 ADVANCED LICKS **LEE RITENOUR**

**This A Dorian lick starts off by ascending the fifth and fourth strings in 3rds. For further interest, each note slides down a semitone and then returns to the original pitch. This brings tension, resolution, and chromatic colour to the sequence. Practise slowly, to ensure all three notes are heard as each pattern ascends the neck. Once you are familiar with the physical motions start to build the tempo. Use your neck pickup and set the gain on your amp fairly high, then, add chorus and reverb.**




## EXAMPLE 6 ADVANCED LICKS **JOEL HOEKSTRA**

**In this lick we play A Minor Pentatonic intervals between the fretting and tapping hand to achieve ferocious intervallic sequences. For all tapped sections, use your first finger to tap the first and third note in each sequence, and the second finger for the second note in each in each tapped phrase. For definition, treat each note as a new tap rather than pulling off or hammering between tapping fingers. This brings separation and clarity. Use bridge pickup, plenty of amp gain, and add reverb.**



**VIDEO & AUDIO** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

# ERIC CLAPTON

Brought to you by...
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**Phil Short** checks out one of the most fabled periods of Eric Clapton's career. The legendary Goodbye Cream era.

Eric Clapton playing an ES-335 on Cream's farewell shows

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★☆☆ **Moderate**

| Info | Will improve your |
|---|---|
| **Key:** Various | ✔ Blending Major and Minor |
| **Tempo:** Various | ✔ Large intervalic bends |
| https://bit.ly/3joL0ul | ✔ Fast hammer-ons and pull-offs |

Eric Clapton is one of the most famous guitarists in the world. His impact on generations is wide and far reaching, and still inspires today's young blues and rock musicians. But what is it that makes Clapton so admired by players and music fans alike? Many guitar heroes have a plethora of aspiring players in their wake, but few attract a crowd that are in it for more than just the fretboard gymnastics.

Eric's Cream years feature some of his most inspiring, raw and authentic playing. It was blues in essence, but the band's powerful delivery helped to create what would become known as rock, with musically adventurous riffs, big volume, and elevated musicianship.

Around the mid-'60s we also had the birth of Marshall stacks, the 1959 SLP 'plexi' providing the required volume and tone for the bigger venues that such bands were playing at the time. If you wanted volume and overdrive, Gibson and Marshall were the go-to brands. So, armed with a plexi and Gibson Les Paul, SG, Firebird or ES-335, Eric, along with Jack, was Cream's harmonic backbone, while the relentless pounding of Ginger's double bass drum kit propelled the threesome to ever greater heights.

Eric's tone was thick, creamy and raw, and there's no doubt that it influenced the start of the '70s heavy metal movement. Tony Iommi founded Black Sabbath in 1968 (the year that Cream split), and will surely have heard Eric's heavy guitar tone and followed suit (he chose an SG, too).

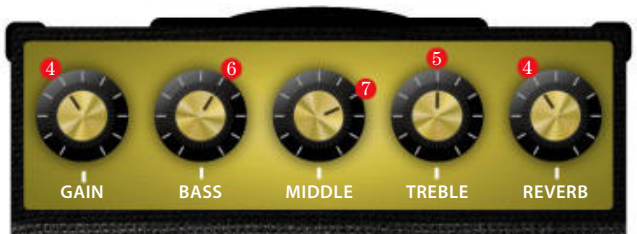
Cream became stratospheric, their US tours in particular being legendary for their extended and incredibly interactive extemporisations. This was three equals at

***"Eric's guitar tone was thick, creamy and raw, and there's no doubt that it influenced the '70s heavy metal movement"***

the height of their powers. Sadly, due to alcohol and drug related issues, tensions between the three rose (especially the notorious feuds of Bruce and Baker) forcing the split in 1968, after less than two years together. Eric went on to have continued success, forming Blind Faith (again with Baker on drums), but the days of this particular power trio were over.

Our two studies this month showcase the energy and ferocity of this three-headed monster, especially highlighting Clapton's fearless and explosive soloing. GT

**NEXT MONTH** *Phil checks out the blues style of the West Midlands' own* ***Joanne Shaw Taylor***




## Get the Tone

In late Cream Clapton used mainly Gibson SG, ES-335 or Firebird into Marshall stacks for that huge , fat tone. While impractical for most of us today any guitar, but preferably one with with humbuckers, will do. Amplifier wise, don't use too much gain. A classic voiced drive pedal will suffice. Make sure there's plenty of mids and bass and knock your tone controls back a bit for the perfect 'Creamy' tone. Add reverb for a 'live Cream' vibe.

**TRACK RECORD** Fresh Cream debuted in 1966 with 11 disparate tracks. Opener, I Feel Free (a hit single) intimates the group's direction and highlights Eric's fat guitar sound. They recorded a total of four albums over the next two years; the farewell, Goodbye Cream, featured blistering live renditions of I'm So Glad, Sittin' On Top Of The World and Politician, plus the hit Badge, Eric's co-write with George Harrison.

MARK AND COLLEEN HAYWARD / GETTY IMAGES

## EXAMPLE 1 **STUDY 1**

**This study features Eric's fast hammer-ons and tone-and-a-half bends. Notice how the solo repeats ideas to in order to sound memorable and stamp an identity.**

## EXAMPLE 2 STUDY 2

Eric is a master of switching between Major and Minor Pentatonic vocabulary in a smooth and lyrical way. Note that the fingering position switches from the 'E' form of C minor Pentatonic to the 'G' form of C Major Pentatonic, essentially keeping the fretting almost identical while drawing out a different tonal flavour.

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**VIDEO & AUDIO** https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

# Nita Strauss

Brought to you by... bimm brighton

**Martin Cooper** checks out a rock guitarist who's earned her stripes on the touring scene, and currently plays with the great Alice Cooper.

'Hurricane' Nita Strauss playing one of her Ibanez guitars

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★★☆ Moderate/Advanced

**Info**
**Key:** Dm
**Tempo:** 97bpm
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Picking techniques
✔ Tight rhythm playing
✔ Theory knowledge

American rock musician Nita Strauss is one of the premier female guitarits in the world. She was the first to receive the honour of a signature model from Ibanez, and has been one of the guitarists in Alice Cooper's band since 2014, when she replaced Orianthi during a tour. Strauss has been on the cover of many guitar magazines, and was ranked number 1 in Guitar World magazine's list of 10 female guitarists that you should know. Additionally, Nita has done numerous guitar clinic and workshop tours around the world (including performing at Future Publishing's own UK Guitar Show in 2019), and previously played in tribute group The Iron Maidens. She has also acted as house guitarist for the LA Kiss football team (owned by Paul Stanley and Gene Simmonds of the band Kiss).

Strauss quit school early to concentrate on music, and used a Kickstarter campaign to fund her first album, Controllled Chaos, on which she played all the guitars and bass. The album was a considerable success, hitting many of the US charts including topping Billboard's Top New Artist list.

Nita's playing is fiery and aggressive, and she makes use of a typical high-gain rock sound. Her rhythm work is tight and precise, and her solos incorporate fast alternate picking, sweep picking and legato phrasing.

The track this month is challenging, and features many of the above techniques. It will require precision in both the picking and fretting hands. In the track the rhythm guitars are double-tracked and panned left and right, which allows space for the lead guitar to sit in the centre of the stereo field.

*"Strauss quit school early to concentrate on music, and used a Kickstarter campaign to fund her first album, Controlled Chaos"*

Although we are in the key of D Minor (D-E-F-G-A-B♭-C), the A Major chord in the arrangement nods towards A Phrygian Dominant mode (A-B♭-C#-D-E-F-G), which is the fifth mode of the D Harmonic Minor (D-E-F-G-A-B♭-C#). It's this that gives us the A Major arpeggio in the solo, even though on this occasion it's actually an A Major 7 arpeggio, which includes a G# note.

The piece should provide some challenges in terms of both rhythm and lead playing. Why not learn the parts as written, then have a go at coming up with some ideas of your own, over the GT backing track.

**NEXT MONTH** *Martin examines Mark Knopfler's style on the early albums from* ***Dire Straits***

## Get the Tone

We are looking for tight rhythm and lead sounds with plenty of preamp gain. Use your guitar's bridge pickup and ensure there's not too much bass as this will help to stop the rhythm tracks, in particular, from sounding muddy. As far as amp tones are concerned, it's high-gain Marshall or Mesa Boogie type rock we're aiming for. Add a splash of reverb.

Nita Strauss released her solo instrumental debut album, Controlled Chaos, in 2018. As well as showcasing her not inconsiderable rhythm and lead chops, the album features some interesting melodies on songs such as Alegria and Here With You. Elsewhere there's plenty of high-octane shredding throughout. The album also includes a great cover of Queen's epic single, The Show Must Go On.

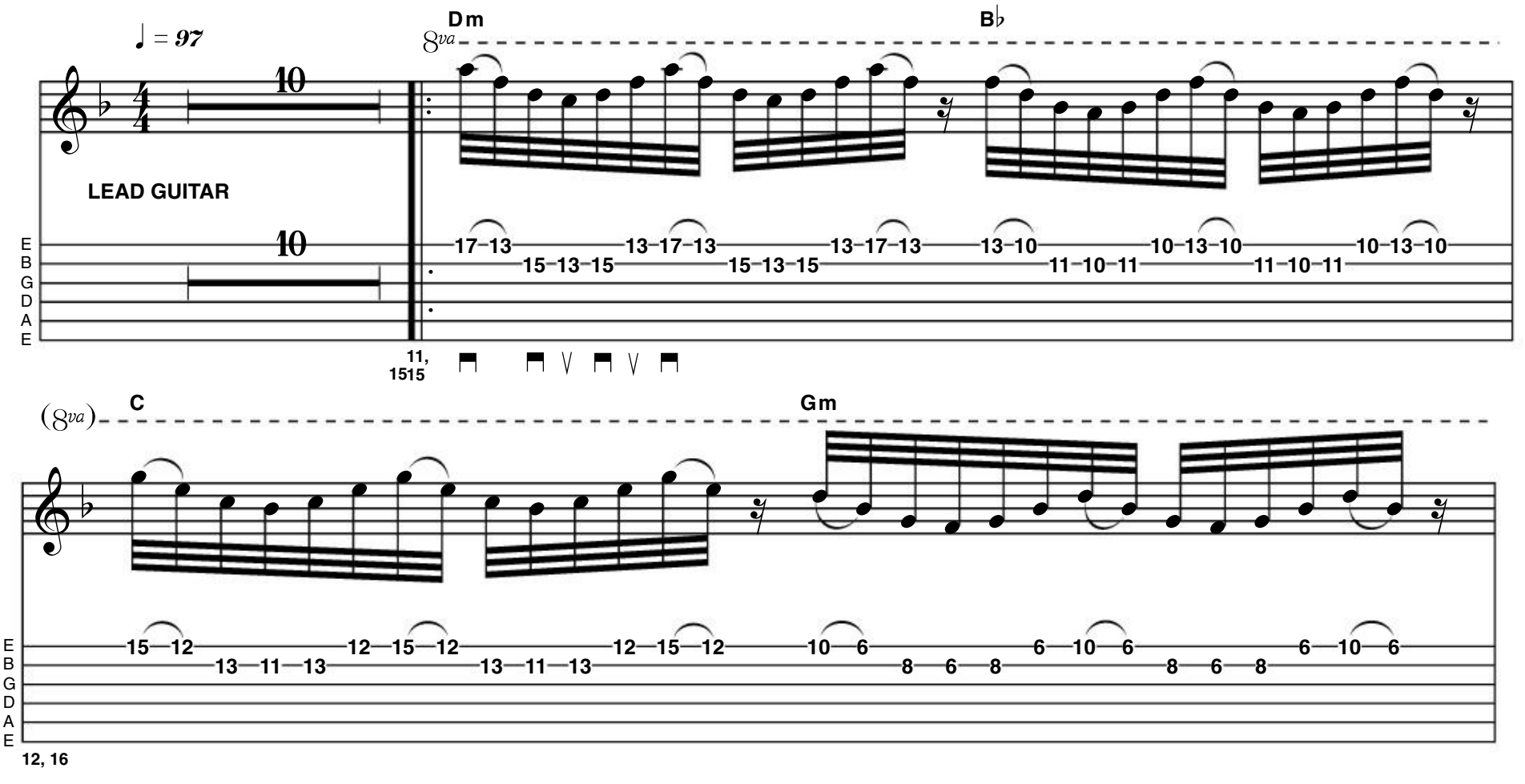
STEVE JENNINGS / GETTY IMAGES

## EXAMPLE 1 **RHYTHM**

**The picking in the rhythm part will be a challenge. Use either all downstrokes for the main riff in bars 3-10, alternate pick the notes, or use a blend of the two styles as was done on the recording, which was two downstrokes on the D note at the start of each phrase, followed by alternate picking for the rest of each phrase.**

## EXAMPLE 2 **SOLO**

**This solo will pose challenges in bars 11-18, so it will be worth experimenting with your fretting-hand fingering for the arpeggios. As a general rule, it's a good idea to use your fourth finger to play the highest note in each phrase. It's best to use alternate picking for bar 26. The last line of music is the second harmony guitar.**



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## EXAMPLE 2 **SOLO**

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# BUMBLEFOOT

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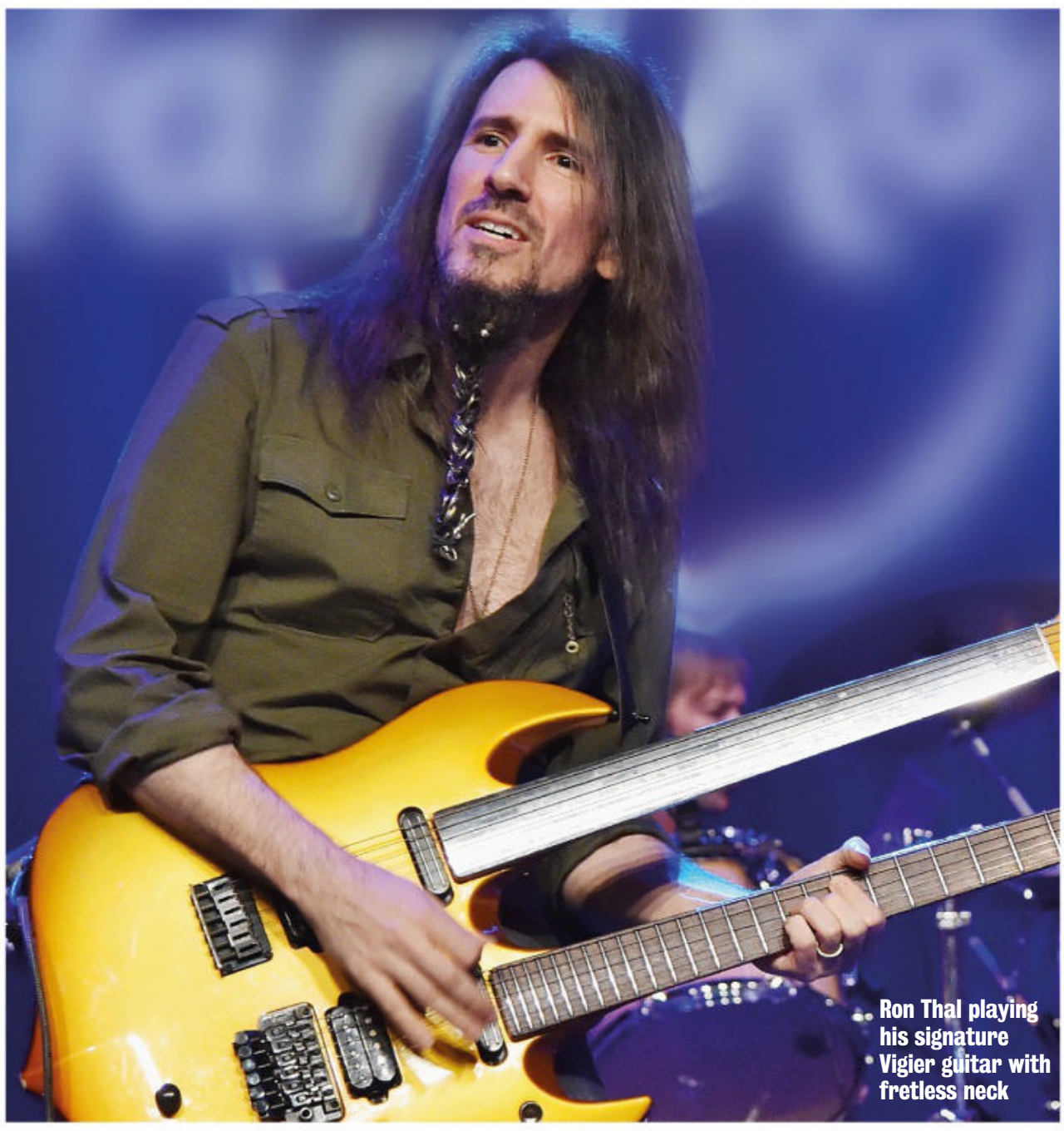
**Charlie Griffiths** takes a look at Ron Thal's weird and wonderful approach to creativity, thinking outside the box and thimble tapping.



Ron Thal playing his signature Vigier guitar with fretless neck

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★★★ Advanced

**Info**
**Key:** Various
**Tempo:** Various
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Use of unusual techniques
✔ Two-handed tapping
✔ Playing beyond the frets

Ron 'Bumblefoot' Thal is perhaps best known for appearing on Guns N' Roses' Chinese Democracy album and as their subsequent touring guitarist. But guitar lovers will have followed The Adventures Of Bumblefoot since that debut solo album of 1995. Since then, Ron has released a host of solo works, most recently Little Brother Is Watching in 2015. He is also a member of prog metal band Sons Of Apollo, with ex-Dream Theater's Derek Sherinian and Mike Portnoy, plus Billy Sheehan on bass.

Ron's style is unique and delivered with jaw-dropping skill. From world-class picking and legato runs, to sweeping, tapping and fingerstyle, Ron has everything covered and more; equally comfortable on the fretted or fretless fretboards of his Vigier double-neck.

We begin with a scale exercise in A Harmonic Minor (1-2-♭3-4-5-♭6-7), played in two octaves, using hybrid picking to alternate between low and high notes. Ron plays this type of thing effortlessly; probably able to have a conversation while doing so.

Example 2 is a tapping lick that ascends the neck using fretting and picking-hand tapping in quintuplets. Examples 3 and 4 are whacky tapped licks that use two fingers of each hand. First is an octave jumping chromatic lick, while the second has two different rhythms played simultaneously.

Finally we look at Ron's thimble tapping, his way of extending the range of the guitar beyond the fretboard and opening up the entire length of the string. For this you'll need to wear a metal sewing thimble on the picking hand's fourth finger (or use any metallic object, such as a whammy bar). It acts as a movable fret which, when tapped on to the string, produces a note, allowing Ron to play beyond the 24th fret. You'll need to develop an eye for where the frets would be. For example the 34th fret is half-way between the 24th fret and the bridge.

> *"From world-class picking and legato runs, to sweeping, tapping and fingerstyle, Ron has everything covered"*

As well as adding imaginary frets, Ron also thinks from the bridge end of the guitar, seeing the thimble as a moveable saddle that shortens the string and raises the pitch of any note you play. In the tab the thimble tapped notes are marked 'TT' and are followed by a number such as '+1'. This means you tap the thimble near the bridge to add 1 semitone to the fretted note. At first this will be largely guess work, but with a fair bit of practice you will learn where these new semitone positions are.

**NEXT MONTH** *Charlie looks at the style of a rare talent of shred, the amazing* ***Shawn Lane***

**Get the Tone**

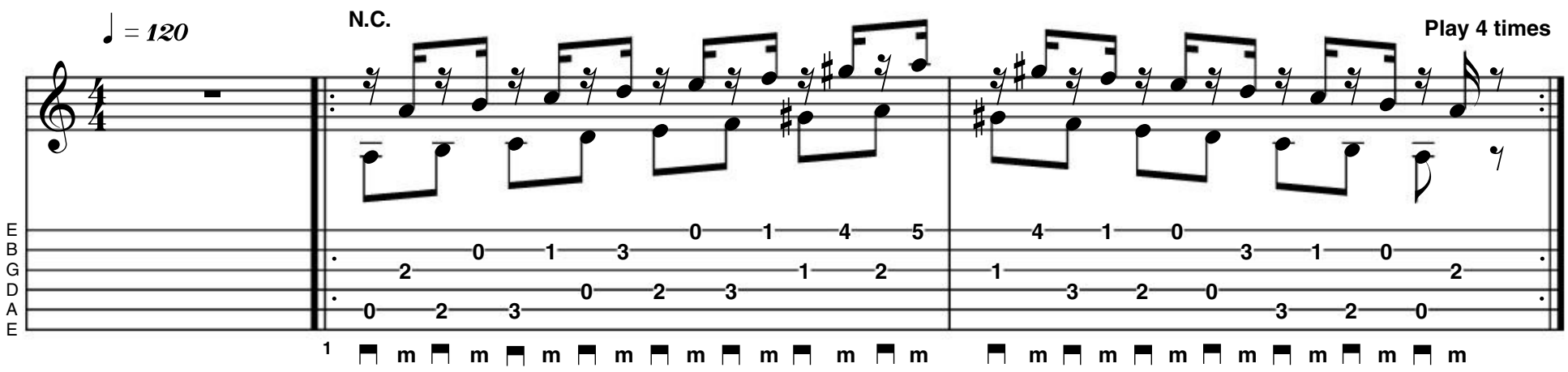
Ron plays Vigier guitars with one single-coil at the neck and a humbucker at the bridge to even out the pickups' sounds. Select either pickup and go for a classic high-gain rock tone with plenty of amp or pedal drive, but go easy on the bass so as to keep the tone from getting muddy, especially when tapping. Light reverb or a medium delay will help the notes pop.

**TRACK RECORD** Although slightly curtailed due to being a band member, there's plenty of worderful Bumblefoot playing on Guns N' Roses' 2008 album Chinese Democracy. However, Ron's debut album The Adventures Of Bumblefoot is where most guitarists heard is unique creativity and stunning chops. Sons Of Apollo's latest album is 2020's MMXX, and Ron's own most recent is Little Brother Is Watching (2015).

MIKE COPPOLA / GETTY IMAGES

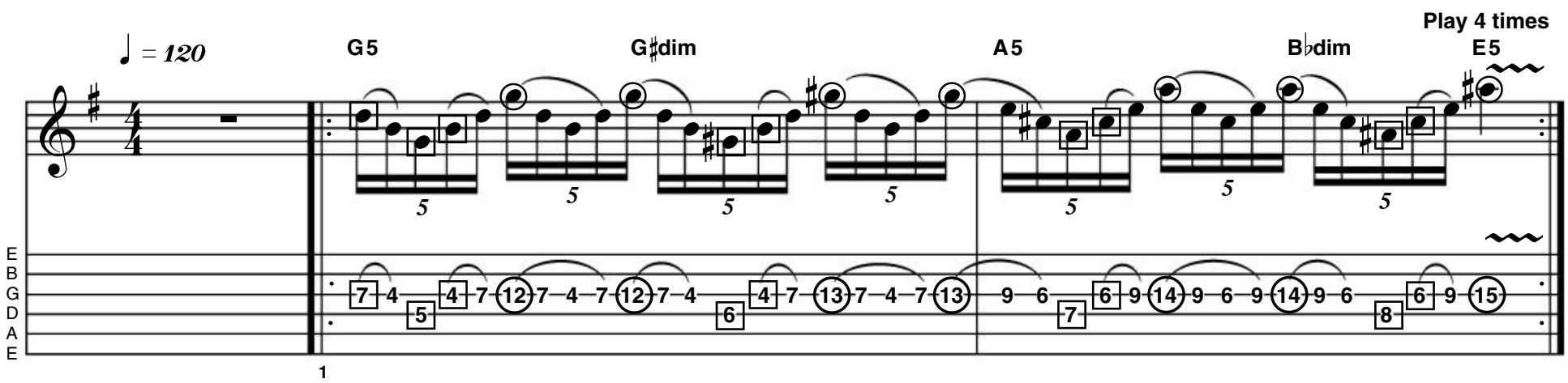
## EXAMPLE 1

Start by playing through the A Hamonic Minor notes in the low octave using downstrokes throughout. You should be able to do this using only your first finger to fret the notes, leaving the other three free to fret the higher octave. Use your second finger in a hybrid picking style to pick the upper octave.



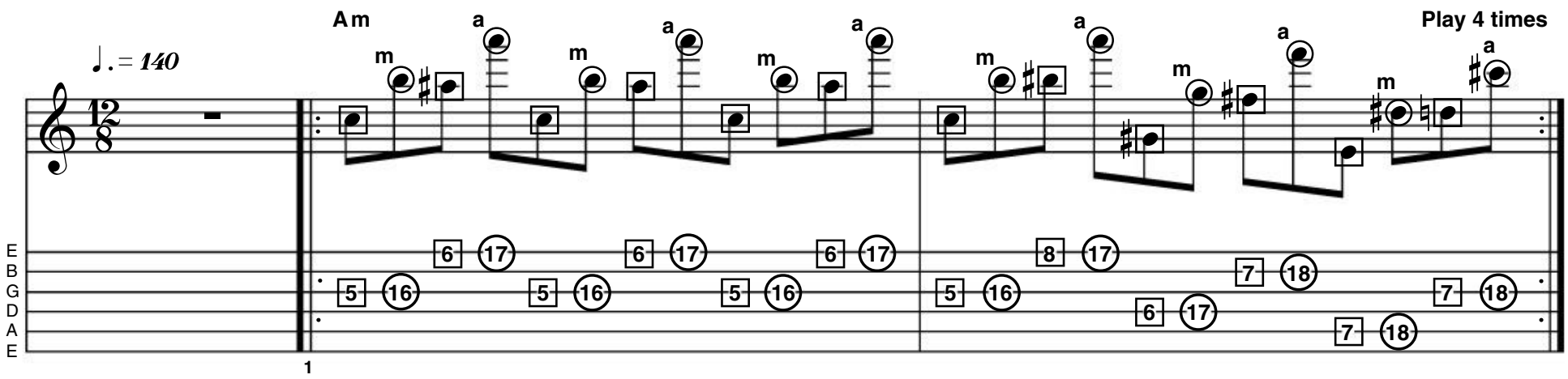

## EXAMPLE 2

Begin this lick with a fourth-finger hammer-on from nowhere, while using your fingers and palm to keep the other strings muted. Next play the five-note phrase using pull-offs and fretting-hand taps while keeping the notes even. Next tap with your picking hand at the 12th fret and descend and ascend the notes along the string. Repeat these two patterns while ascending the neck through the Major and Diminished shapes.



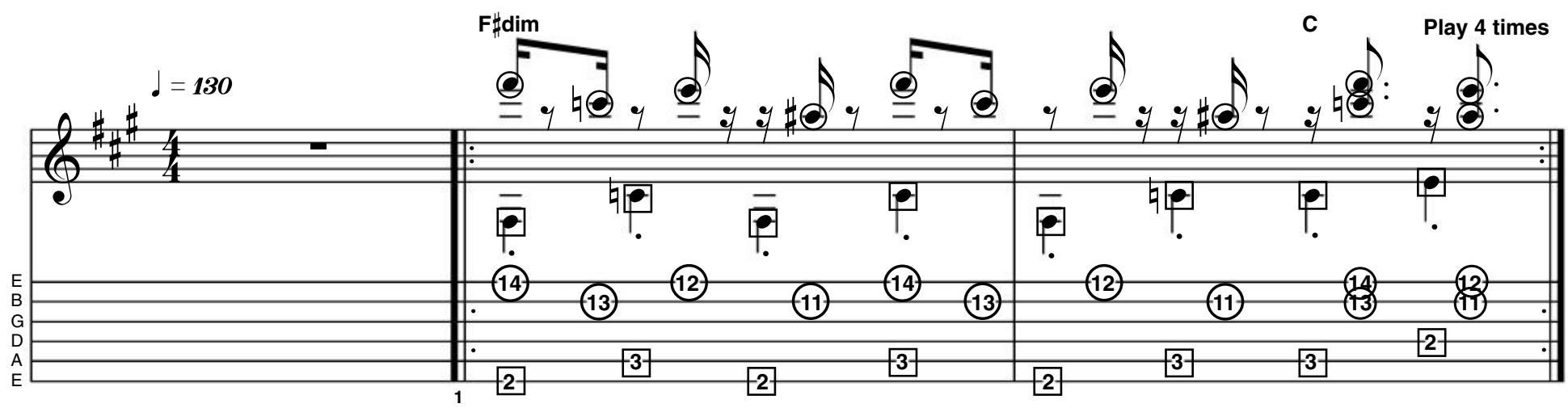

## EXAMPLE 3

Use your fretting hand's second and third fingers to hammer-on to the 5th and 6th frets, while using picking-hand second and third fingers to tap up at the 16th and 17th frets. These four notes are a descending chromatic scale, with alternate octave displaced jumps. Repeat four times before moving down to the lower strings with the same fingers. Another challenge is the four-note melody played in a triplet feel, so keep your foot tapping on the downbeats to stay in time.



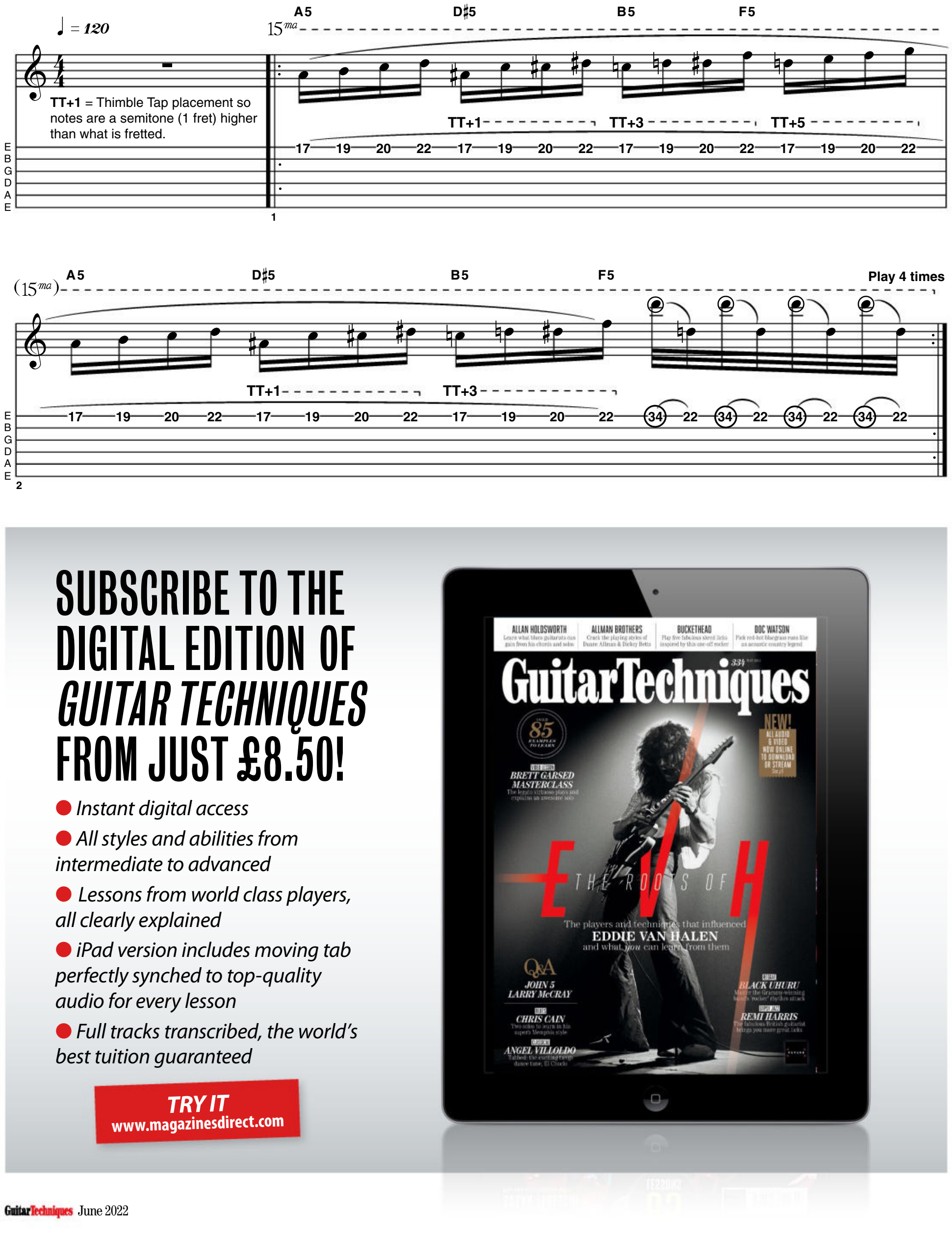

## EXAMPLE 4

Play the squared notes with your fretting hand by hammering on to the 2nd and 3rd frets. You can use your second an third fingers for the hammer-ons while resting your first finger across the 1st fret to mute the strings. While keeping the bass line going, use your picking hand to tap the melody notes. You can also practise the rhythm away from the guitar by tapping quarter-notes with one hand and dotted 8th notes with the other.



## EXAMPLE 5

**Use four fingers to hammer-on, then pull-off the notes A-B-C-D on the 17th, 19th, 20th and 22nd frets throughout. Notice that your fretting fingers never move out of this position. As you legato through the notes, place your thimble on the string near the bridge. Start near the saddle to transpose the notes up a semitone, then three semitones, then five semitones. For a pitch bending effect trying sliding the thimble along the string.**

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# BOB MARLEY

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**Simon Barnard** takes another look at Bob Marley, this time with a study of the muted single note lines played by guitarist Junior Marvin.

**ABILITY RATING**

★★☆☆☆ **Easy/Moderate**

**Info**
**Key:** A
**Tempo:** 100bpm
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Syncopated guitar lines
✔ Palm muting
✔ Using arpeggios

When one thinks of reggae guitar, the first thing that often comes to mind is the off-beat 'skank' rhythm. In issue 333 we kicked off this series by exploring some of the permutations of this rhythm, as used by Bob Marley and his various guitarists. But another important facet of reggae guitar is the use of single-note lines, which we introduced in last month's article on Black Uhuru.

One of the most well-known examples of single-note reggae guitar is found on the Marley classic, Could You Be Loved, and its signature muted intro played by Junior Marvin. Marvin recalled that Bob heard him playing around with the opening riff while in London. He liked it so much, he asked Junior if he could use it. The story goes that the two of them recorded the song together in Brazil, with Jacob Miller from the band Inner Circle. While this may be anecdotal, the lasting legacy of the line is cemented in reggae history. These types of lines can be heard in other Bob Marley songs, such as Stir It Up and Get Up, Stand Up, and borrow from early funk and R&B guitar.

An important element here is palm muting, which gives a shorter attack, so emphasising the rhythm and syncopation of the lines. Sometimes, the phrases are played in unison with the bass guitar. However, they can often be composed as counter-melodies, used to complement the bass and vocals. We explore both approaches in this month's piece, with three different guitar melodies separated by a unison line that's doubled by the bass guitar and organ.

The piece also introduces the third of the three most common reggae grooves and drum patterns, the 'steppers' style. We've looked at the 'one drop' beat where the kick drum plays on beat 3 of the bar (often with a snare or cross stick hit), and the 'rockers' style, where the kick is played on beats 1 and 3 and the snare on 2 and 4. The steppers style features a four-to-the-floor rhythm where the kick drum plays on every beat, similar to '70s disco. This provides a solid, driving back-beat which pushes the groove forwards. Allegedly, Bob Marley wrote Could You Be Loved with this in mind, as the steppers groove and faster tempo gave an almost disco feel to the song, which was popular with black audiences at the time.

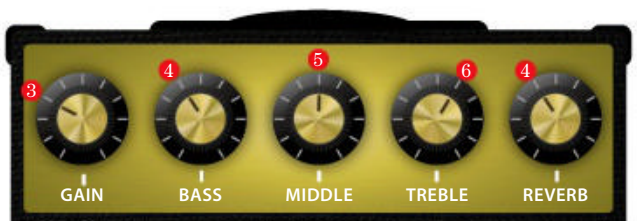
> *"Junior Marvin recalled that Bob Marley heard him playing Could You Be Loved's opening line and asked if he could use it"*

When playing this month's study piece, experiment with the amount of force used when palm muting, making sure not to increase the pitch of the notes by pushing down too hard on the strings. I would also advocate an alternate-picking style, which is favoured by most reggae and funk guitarists when playing these kinds of lines. This allows you to keep a consistent 'up and down' picking approach which helps you stay in the groove. I have notated picking directions at the start of each example. GT

Junior Marvin, Marcia Griffiths and Rita Marley on stage in 1978

ED PERLSTEIN / GETTY IMAGES

**NEXT MONTH** *Simon highlights how other genres have adopted reggae, in* ***Reggae Meets Pop***




## Get the Tone

As you can see from our fantastic picture, Junior Marvin often played a Fender Strat with Bob Marley. We want a clean tone with light reverb , and it's worth experiment with different pickup configurations - bridge and middle on a Strat style guitar (or middle setting on a twin-humbucking guitar) sounds great with the light palm muting required for the examples.

**TRACK RECORD** The opening guitar line to Could You Be Loved is legendary and sets the mood for a great Bob Marley song. Listen to the original recording on the Bob Marley And The Wailers album, Uprising. But it's also worth searching for live versions on YouTube to see the song played live in concert. But every household should have Bob Marley's Greatest Hits, as it documents a brilliant if curtailed career.

## EXAMPLE **STUDY PIECE**

**[Bars 1-8]** We start with a 16th-note idea using the arpeggios of each chord (1-3-5) coupled with percussive muted notes (with an 'x' note head.) To achieve these, lift the pressure of your fretting hands so that you are still in contact with the string but not pushing down to the fretboard. The whole of the piece is played with picking-hand palm muting. Begin by following my picking instructions but also feel free to experiment with your own approach.

**[Bars 9-12]** Here we see a unison line in which an A6 arpeggio (1-3-5-6) is used to play over the A Major chord, and D6 and E6 arpeggio over the D and E chords. You will notice that down strokes are used on the down beat and the 'and' of each beat, while an upstroke is used on the 'e' and 'a'.

**[Bars 13-20]** A new idea is showcased in these bars. The important thing to notice here is how, when the chord changes, the guitar line uses the bottom three strings exclusively. This keeps the guitar tone sounding cohesive. However, feel free to experiment with different positions for an alternative timbre. Again, a Major 6th arpeggio is used over each chord, which is essentially the Major Pentatonic scale minus its 2nd degree.

## STUDY PIECE ...CONTINUED

**[Bars 21-34]** The unison idea found in bars 9-12 reappears here, before a third picking line enters between bars 25-32. This idea once again uses Major 6th arpeggios, albeit using a different shape than that found in bars 13-20. The same principles apply, with the palm muting technique employed and having each position played on the same three strings, shifting up and down the guitar neck rather than across it. The piece ends with a final unison line between bars 33-34. Make sure that you lock in with the bass, organ and drums, ensuring that the final two A notes are dead on the beat.

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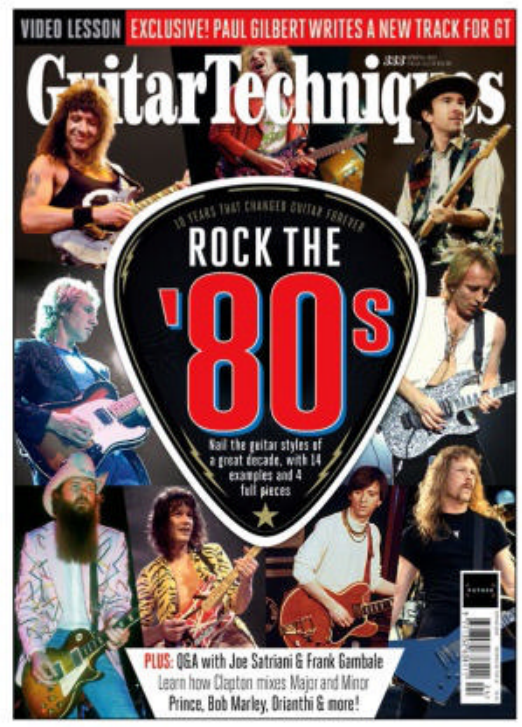


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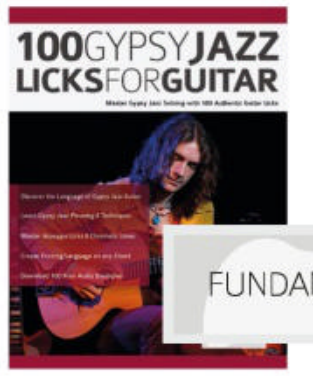
# REMI HARRIS

This month **Remi Harris** of Fundamental Changes concludes his series on gypsy jazz showing some cool ideas over II-V-I changes.

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FUNDAMENTALCHANGES

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★★☆ **Moderate/Advanced**

**Info**
**Key:** Various
**Tempo:** Various
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Gypsy jazz technique
✔ Use of chord tones
✔ Playing in different keys

We've worked through a collection of licks you can play over static chords, so now it's time to explore a series of licks that work over the most common progression in gypsy jazz – the II-V-I sequence. These licks are played over both Major and Minor II-V-Is, in two of the most popular keys in the gypsy jazz repertoire:

Remi Harris playing a beautiful oval-hole Maccaferri style guitar by Fylde

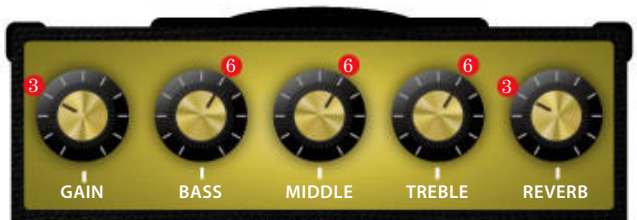
G Major and A Minor. If you develop some good vocabulary around Major and Minor II-V-Is, you'll have something to say on a vast amount of the gypsy jazz repertoire, because nearly every tune uses these cadences.

First up, some II-V-I licks in the key of G Major. Imagine you see the chord progression Am7-D7-Gmaj7 on a chord chart. You could play it using the chord shapes opposite. I chose to use a G Major inversion to keep all three chords in the same zone of the neck.

***"If you develop some good vocabulary around Major and Minor II-V-Is you'll have a lot to say on a vast amount of gypsy jazz"***

To move your playing forward, revisit one of these licks and learn it in other positions on the neck. Then transpose it to other keys. Learn it inside out, then put it to use in one of your favourite standards. It's a sure-fire way to add phrases to your vocabulary. Repeat it with as many licks as possible and you'll be well on your way to becoming an authentic-sounding gypsy jazz soloist. GT

**NEXT MONTH** *Chris Brooks has a new economy picking series with* ***Fundamental Changes***




## Get the Tone

If you want to take gypsy jazz seriously, you'll need a dedicated instrument, usually patterned after Selmer/Maccaferri guitars. These were designed to project single notes and kick out comping chords. But a regular acoustic with a heavy pick will sound fine, and even Django went electric, so these licks will sound great that way too. Try light reverb. Or even none at all.

**TRACK RECORD** Acknowledged as the father of gypsy jazz guitar, Belgian legend Django Reinhardt laid down the template in his work with Stephane Grappelli and the Quintette du Hot Club de France in the 1930s and 40s. Djangology, released in 1961, is a great compilation featuring famous tracks like the title track itself, Minor Swing, Beyond The Sea, I Got Rhythm. Jazz In Paris features the brilliant Nuages.

## DIAGRAMS

**FIGURE 1: II-V-I PROGRESSION**

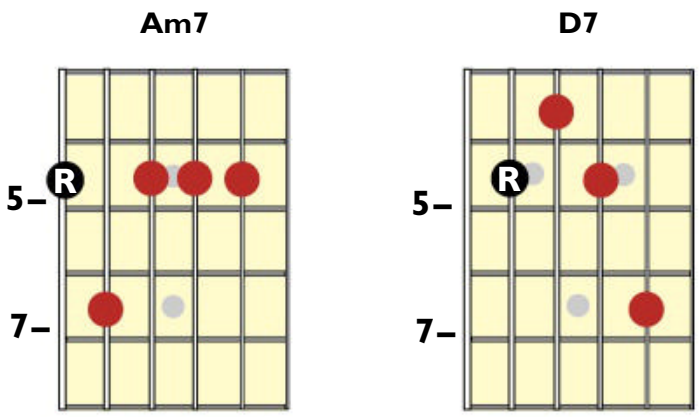
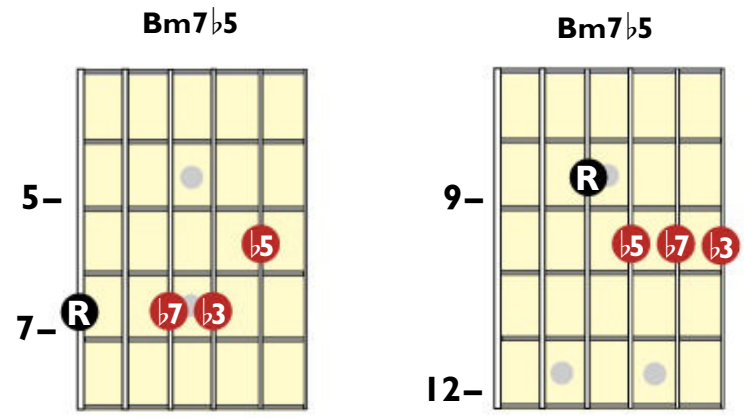
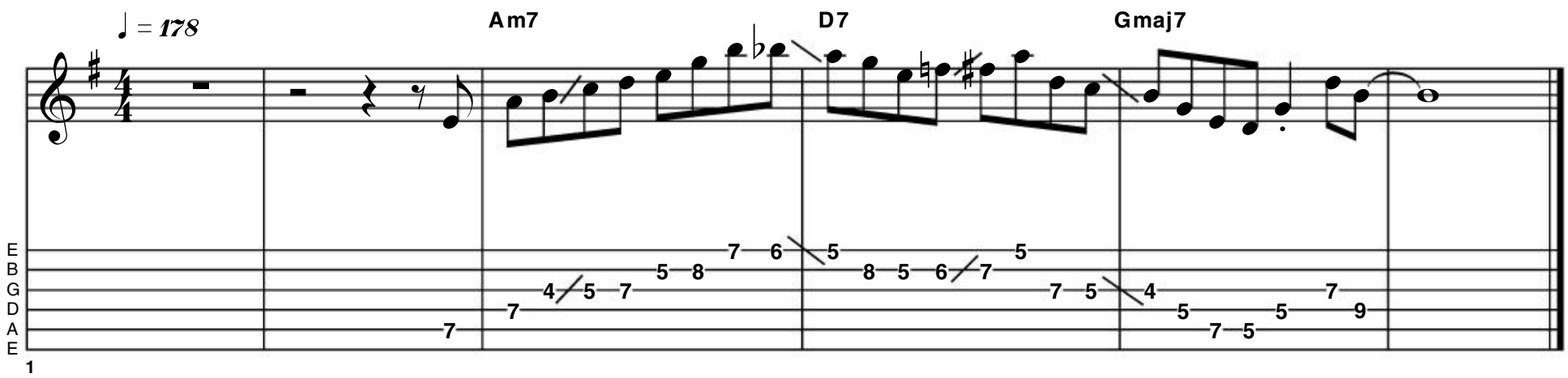



**FIGURE 2: Bm7♭5 SHAPES**



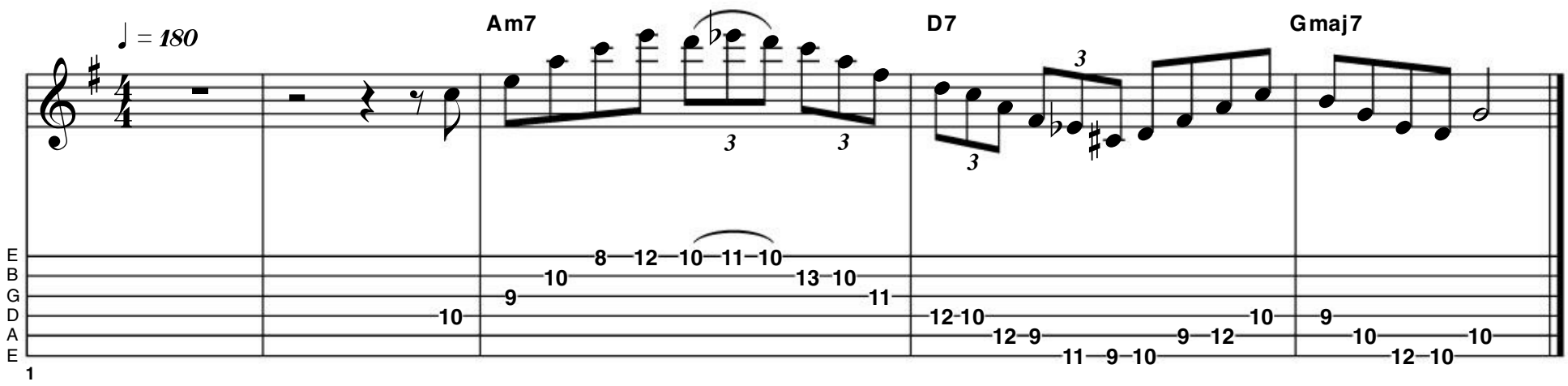

## EXAMPLE 1 KEEPING YOUR LICKS IN ONE AREA

Visualise your chord shapes as you play slowly through this first lick. Notice where the strong chord tones are located for each chord, and which passing notes that surround the shape are being used. For the rest of the examples, I'm not going to point out the chord shapes – I'll leave you to work out the most logical shapes. Bear in mind that we're only looking to play passing notes that are in relatively easy reach, within a five or six-fret zone.



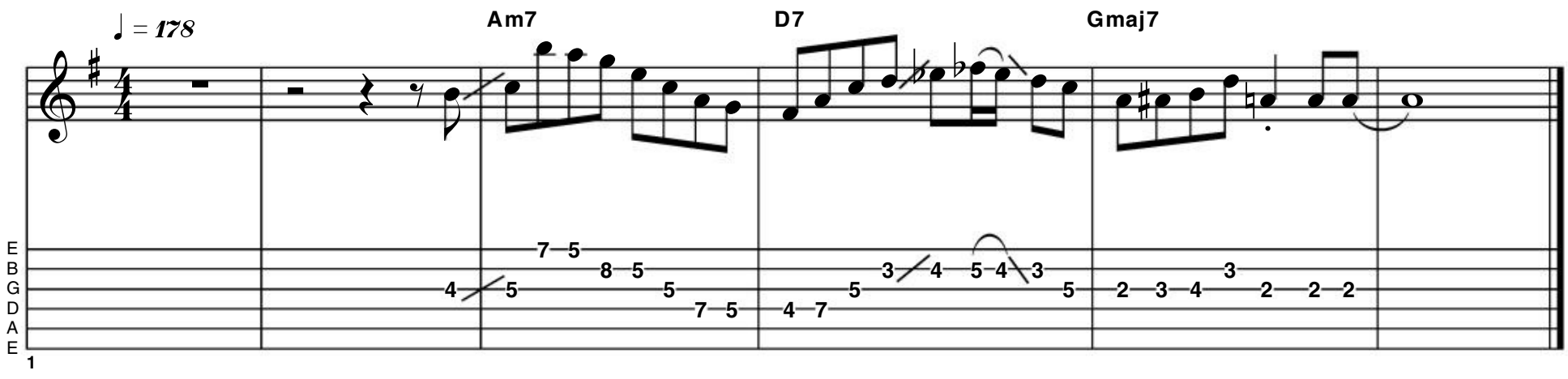

## EXAMPLE 2 IMPLYING CHORDS, AND ENCLOSURE

In this idea, the passing E♭ note in bar 3 implies the underlying chord could be a more colourful Am7♭5. Notice the enclosure over the D7 chord in bar 4.



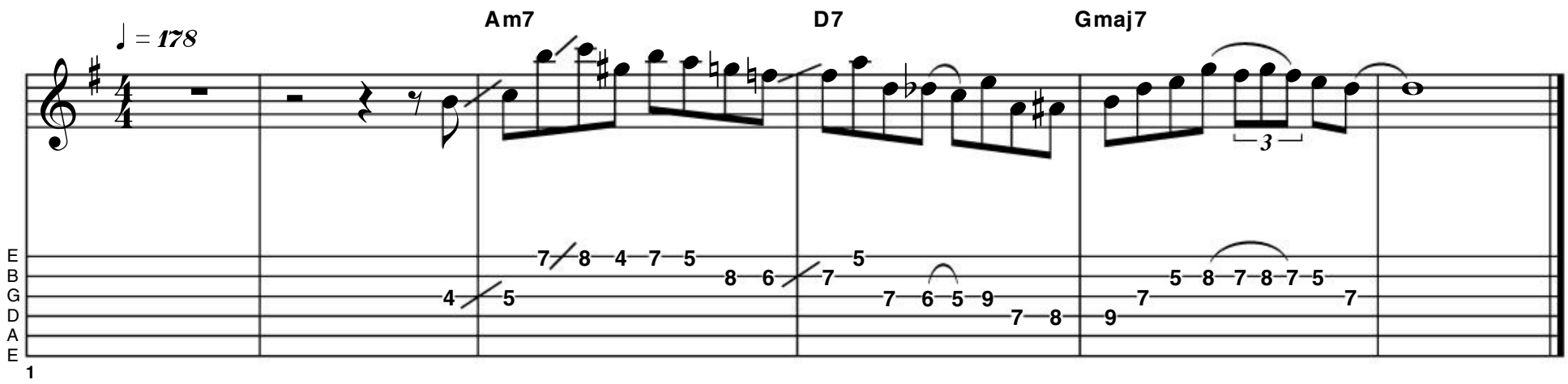

## EXAMPLE 3 DIMINISHED IDEAS AND NOTE TARGETING

In the next line, after outlining the Am7 chord simply, we use the Diminished 7 idea over the D7 chord, starting the line from its 3rd. Notice how the D7 and Gmaj7 lines dovetail together; the chromatic walk-up at the beginning of bar 3 lands on the 3rd of the Gmaj7.



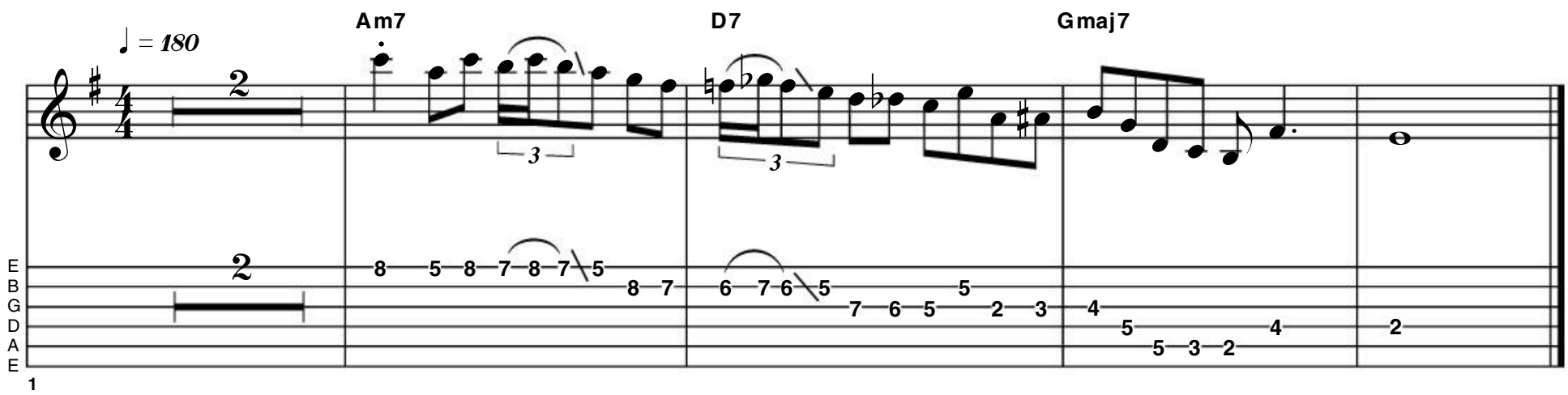
## EXAMPLE 4 IMPLYING MELODIC MINOR

**For this lick, a C passing note used in conjunction with the G# chord tone creates a Melodic Minor sounding lick over the Am7 chord.**



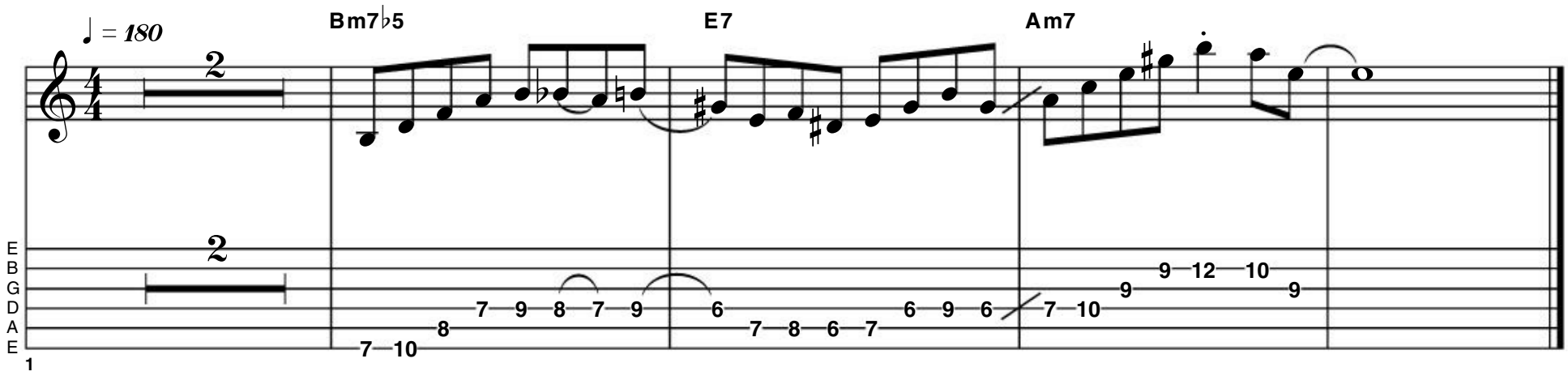

## EXAMPLE 5 TRILLS AND CHROMATICISM

**This idea uses fast trills along with some chromaticism to weave through the changes. On the '3&' of bar 4 I'm using my fourth finger as it helps me to pivot to the next note on the 2nd fret.**



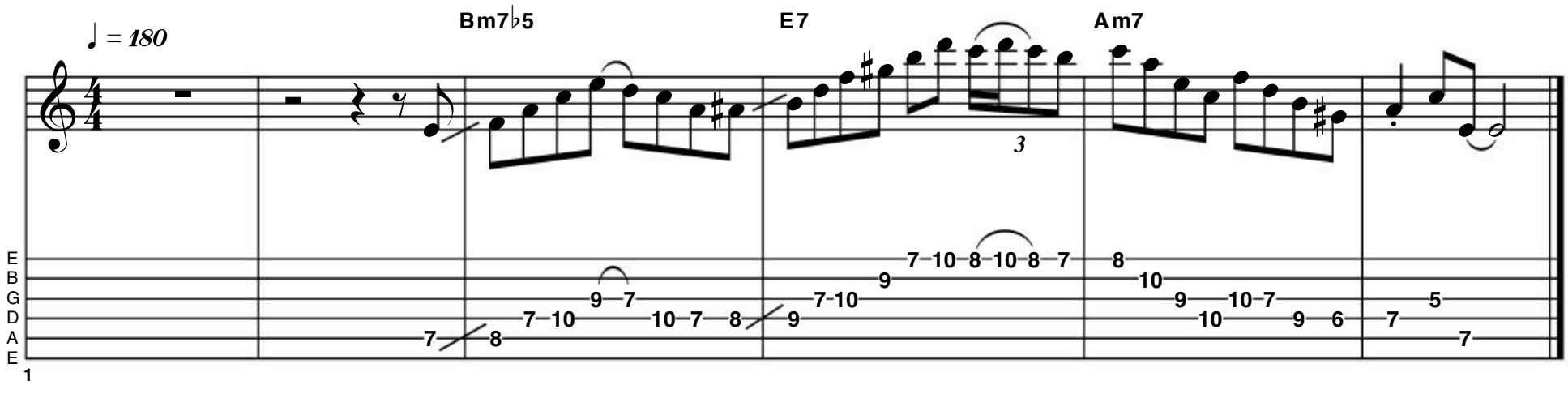

## EXAMPLE 6 IMPLYING M7♭5

**Next, we turn to licks in the key of A Minor. Now, the II-V-I sequence is Bm7♭5-E7-Am7. We haven't looked at the m7♭5 chord in isolation, as it's extremely rare that you'll ever have to solo over multiple bars of this chord in gypsy jazz. However, we'll apply exactly the same thinking as before and build m7♭5 lines around commonly played chord shapes, drawing on the passing notes that surround them. I'll discuss some of the ideas I've used as we go. In this first lick, I'm thinking around the m7♭5 shape (see the two Bm7♭5 shapes on page 69, fig 2). Bm7♭5 has the notes B (root), D (♭3), F (♭5), A (♭7). Notice where the safe intervals are located in relation to the root. In bar 1, a single passing note is added, and the line targets the 3rd of the E7 chord in bar two. Apply wide vibrato to the final note.**




## EXAMPLE 7 IMPLYING A MORE COMPLEX TONALITY

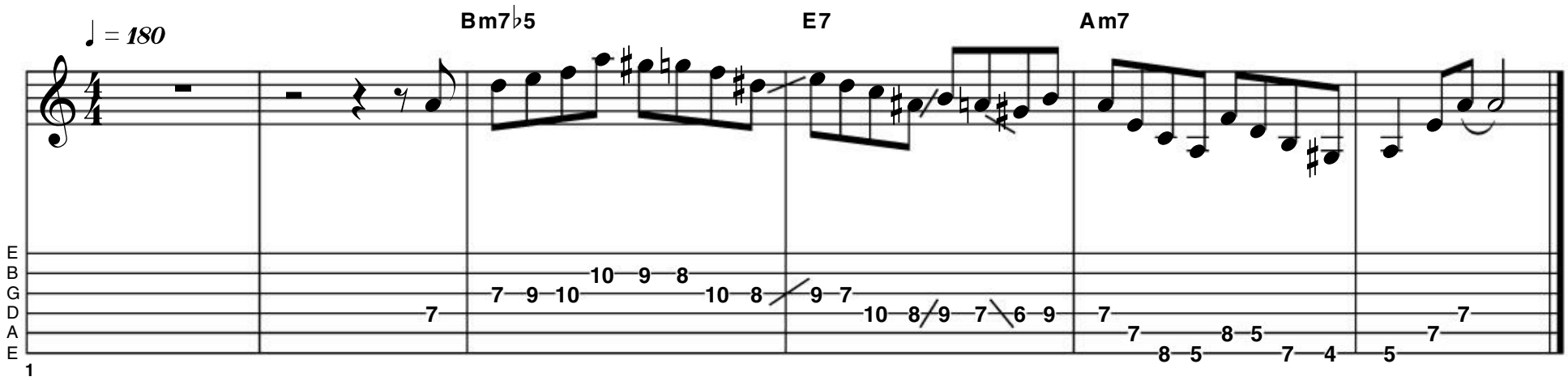
**After the pick-up approach note, this lick launches from the ♭5 of Bm7♭5. Twice in bar 3 we have a C passing note and its effect is to imply a richer Bm7♭5♭9 chord.**



## EXAMPLE 8 **FRETBOARD MAPPING AND CHORD VISUALISING**

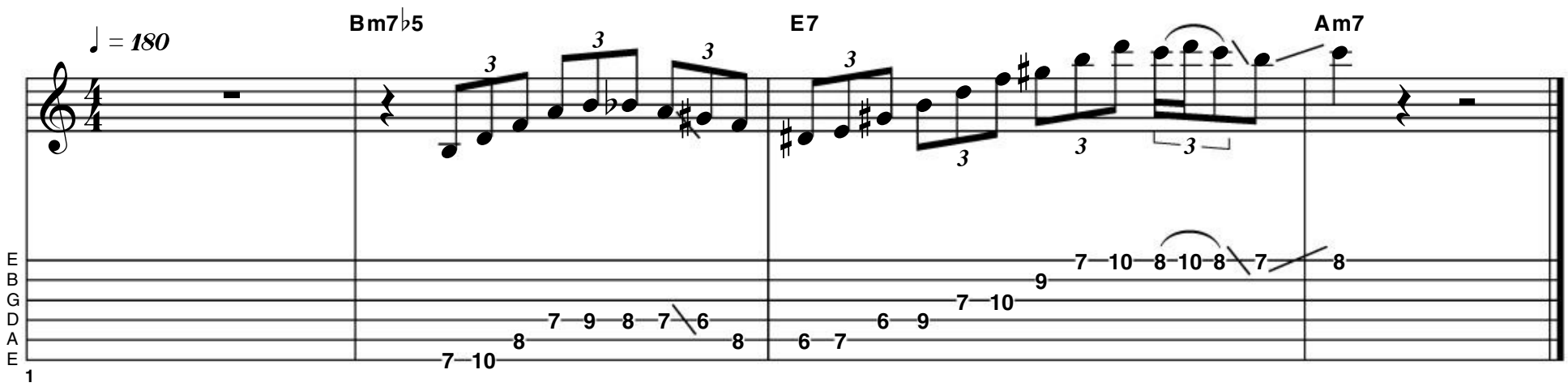
A trick when playing over Bm7♭5 is to visualise the notes of a Dm6 chord, as both contain identical notes: Bm7♭5 (B-D-F-A); Dm6 (D-F-A-B). In the key of A Minor, Bm7♭5 is the II chord and Dm7 the IV chord. It's common to substitute the II with the IV, and you can use variations of D Minor (m7, m6 and m9 are all options).

This is what I'm visualising at the start of the next lick. The first five notes are essentially a Dm9 arpeggio.This trick of visualising II and IV chords together can expand your fretboard map and also work in a Major key. For example, Dm7 and F6 (II and IV chords of C Major) contain the same four notes D-F-C-A.



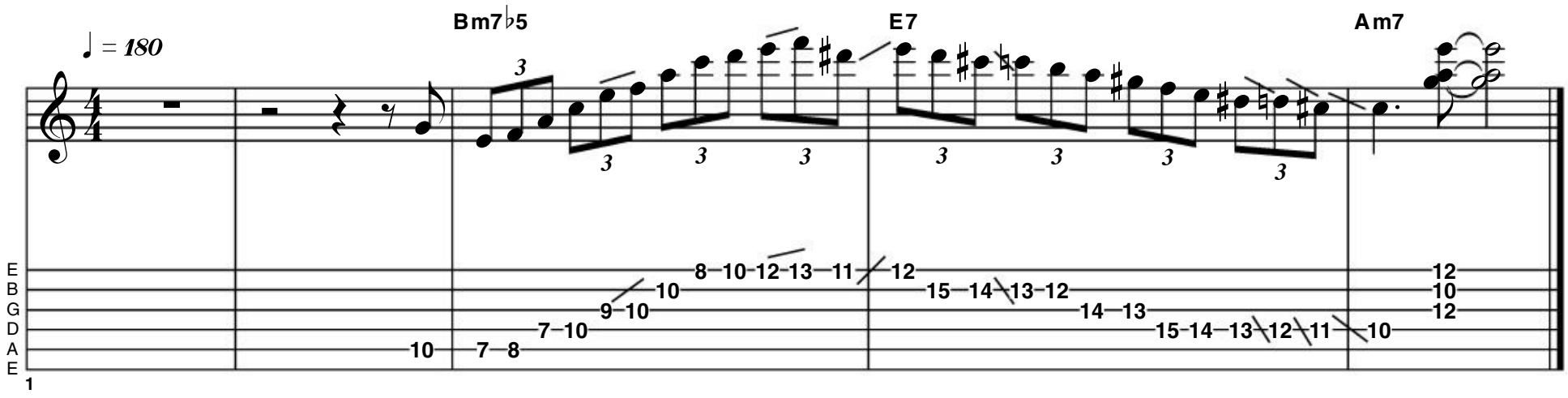

## EXAMPLE 9 **EIGHTH-NOTE PHRASING AND DIMINISHED RUN**

For the final two lines we're going to look at some licks that contain the eighth-note triplet phrasing that is so much a part of gypsy jazz vocabulary. This lick uses the tried and tested Diminished run arranged in triplets over the E7 chord.




## EXAMPLE 10 **FAST POSITION SHIFTS**

Here's a more challenging lick that involves some fast position shifting. In bar 2, begin with your first finger hovering over 7th position and play the G note in the pick-up bar with your fourth finger. When you reach the notes on the first string, play the 8th and 10th frets with the first and second fingers respectively, then slide the first finger up to the 12th. You'll now be in the perfect position for the rest of the lick.



# CHET ATKINS

ON VIDEO

This month **Stuart Ryan** shows you how to play like one of Nashville's most successful producers, session guitarists, and a veritable picking legend.

Chet playing his rare Gibson Studio CE electro-acoustic

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★☆☆ **Moderate**

**Info**
**Key:** C
**Tempo:** 95bpm
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Travis picking
✔ Fingerstyle co-ordination
✔ Timekeeping

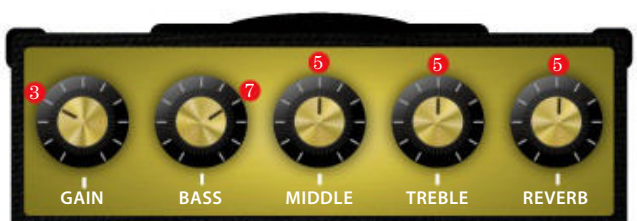
Chet Atkins was born in Luttrell, Tennessee on June 20, 1924. His style was inspired by Merle Travis and his famed picking technique. Growing up poor meant he faced real challenges as a burgeoning guitarist, not least having to travel miles to find a power supply for his amplifier, as his home did not have electricity. A musical genius, Atkins took the Travis picking style and made it his own; while Merle used only thumb and first finger to pick the strings, Atkins combined his thumb, first, second and third fingers, hugely increasing his picking range. His style was also shaped by Django Reinhardt, Les Paul, and later his friend and frequent musical partner, Jerry Reed.

Atkins started his long, awe-inspiring career by playing with June Carter and the legendary Carter Family, and had his first hit in the early 1950s with his arrangement of Mr Sandman. He also designed guitars for Gretsch and latterly became label boss at the Nashville division of the RCA Victor record company, helping to develop what became known as the 'Nashville Sound'. In the process he made country music popular again, playing on countless hits for artists like the Everly Brothers, Jim Reeves and Don Gibson. He later recorded hit albums with both Mark Kopfler and Les Paul.

> *"His style was also shaped by Django Reinhardt, Les Paul, and his friend and frequent musical partner Jerry Reed"*

Like his protégé, Tommy Emmanuel, Chet was one of a handful of fingerstyle guitarists who could enrapture both the technique-seeking guitar-player fraternity, and the wider music-loving public. He is one of those few players who can make guitar players of any genre do an about-face with his beautiful tone, incredible technique and masterful arranging abilities. GT

**NEXT MONTH** *Stuart continues his acoustic picking with a look at* ***Jerry Reed****.*




## Get the Tone

Atkins used many guitars over his long career, from his Gretsch Country Gentleman and Chet Atkins models to various Martins, the ingenious Gibson CE nylon-string models, and later on instruments made by the incredible luthier Kirk Sand. But you can play this style on any guitar, acoustic or electric, and I recorded this month's track on a Gibson Custom Shop 1934 Jumbo.

**TRACK RECORD** Atkins released many albums over his lifetime and sold millions of records. Try the 1997 duo album with Tommy Emmanuel, The Day Fingerpickers Took Over the World. Other favourite picks include Me And Chet with his friend Jerry Reed, The Atkins-Travis Travelling Show with Merle Travis, the Chester & Lester albums with Les Paul, and Neck And Neck with Mark Knopfler.

TIM MOSENFELDER / GETTY IMAGES

## EXAMPLE 1 **CHET ATKINS STYLE**

**[Bars 1-16]** Like Merle Travis, Chet Atkins would often use the 'thumb over the neck' fretting and this was commonly employed on an F chord. It's an idiosyncratic approach but integral to playing much of their repertoire so spend some time on the first four bars to get a sense of how they did things.

## EXAMPLE 2 CHET ATKINS STYLE

**[Bars 26-32]** From bar 26 onwards you'll see how Atkins would embellish chords with melody notes, as in the E7, and this formed the basis of how he created arrangements. Also check out the descending bass movement on the sixth string, from the Am all the way down to the F.

# THEM CHANGES

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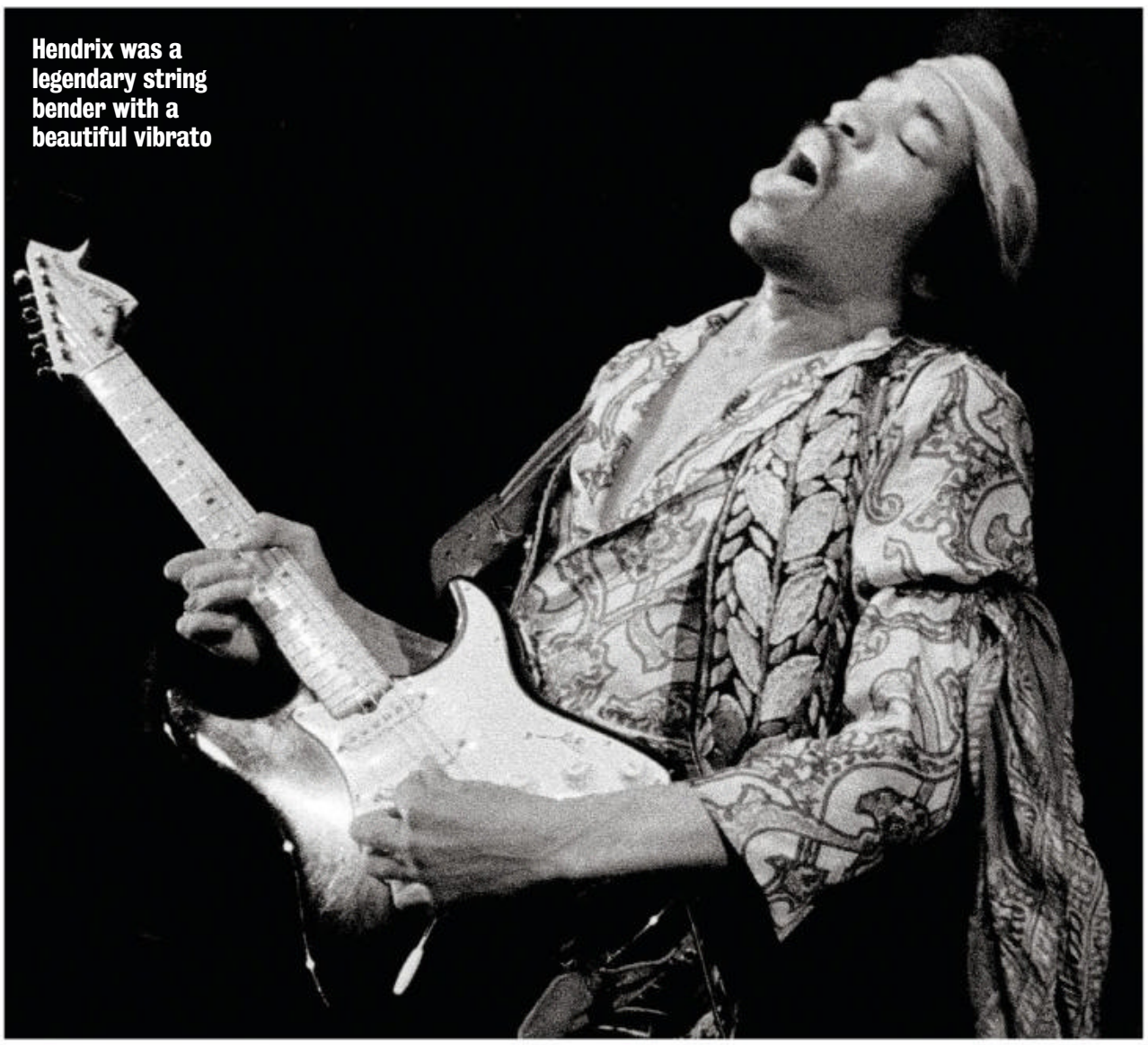
This month **Andy G Jones** looks into how you can use string bending more musically, by targeting chord tones and extensions.



Hendrix was a legendary string bender with a beautiful vibrato

**ABILITY RATING**

★★★★☆ **Moderate/Advanced**

**Info**
**Key:** Various
**Tempo:** 95bpm
https://bit.ly/3joL0ul

**Will improve your**
✔ Ability to outline chord changes
✔ Bending technique
✔ Blues-rock phrasing

This month we're looking at string bending. One trap that less experienced players sometimes fall into is playing bends into and out of notes that don't make harmonic sense. The great players know which are the good notes to start and end bends on. This goes for masters from BB King (who used some wild bends but always sounded great!) to Jeff Beck and Steve Vai.

Many players look to classic blues and blues rock players as the basis of their bending approach and this is probably a good idea. The great blues players all have a deliberate vibrato which brings an extra spark to their bends.

Although we're not going to make a study of it in this lesson, I suggest that whenever you practise any bend you should play the fretted note before attempting the bent note to get the target pitch in your ears before you go for it. If you're jumping from one type of guitar to another, sometimes it takes a minute to recalibrate how much pressure to apply to the bends to get them in tune.

Say you're bending up a tone. Try nailing the bend but use a metronome set pretty slowly. Bend up and release at the same speed. Start with two beats on each note. When you're comfortable with that, try a pre-bend. This is where you bend the string but don't sound the bend - the string is bent *before* you pick the string. This might take a little longer to get in tune. Do the same thing for semitone, Minor and Major 3rd bends. Don't forget to support the finger you bend with by using the other fingers. For instance, if you're bending with the third finger, also put the first and second fingers on the same string on a one-finger-per-fret basis.

In this lesson, I definitely had Jimi Hendrix in mind as an influence. There are quite a few instances where I used a bend from the 4th to the #4 (or ♭5), as Jimi did on Who Knows, from Band Of Gypsys.

In this lesson, I deliberately target the chord tones and extensions to make the

***"Bending to the flat 7th from the Major 6th sounds more advanced than the basic bends used in Minor Pentatonic playing"***

bends very defined harmonically. This is a little different to the approach where we stick to the bends we learned early on. For instance, bending to the ♭7th from the Major 6th immediately sounds more advanced than the basic bends used in Pentatonic style playing. It's not a huge shift but can open up many more possibilities for legato phrasing.

Some of the later examples feature Minor 3rd bends. These are huge part of blues phrasing and can be heard in classic solos by the likes of Peter Frampton, Joe Walsh, Don Felder, and of course Hendrix. E1

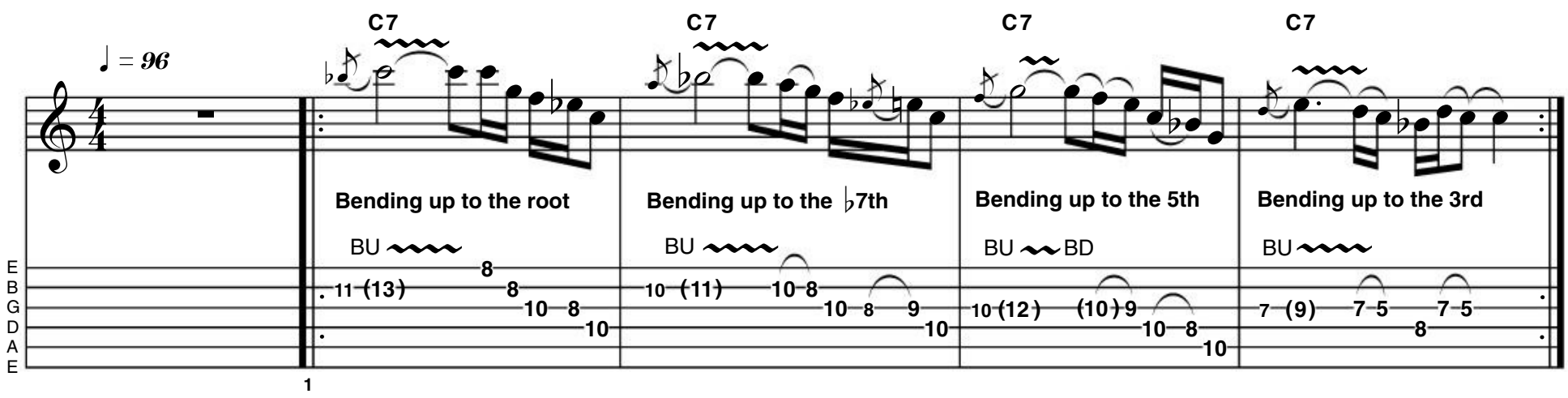
**NEXT MONTH** *Andy brings you another lesson in his series looking at* ***changes playing***

**TRACK RECORD** Jimi Hendrix's live album Band Of Gypsys was released in 1970 and is considered to be one of the best live albums of all time. Jimi is on fire on this record - his tone is amazing too. Machine Gun is on this one but check out the solo and fills on Who Knows, and the stunning slow blues workout of Hear My Train A Comin', which rivals his live Red House from Hendrix In The West.

JORGEN ANGEL / GETTY IMAGES

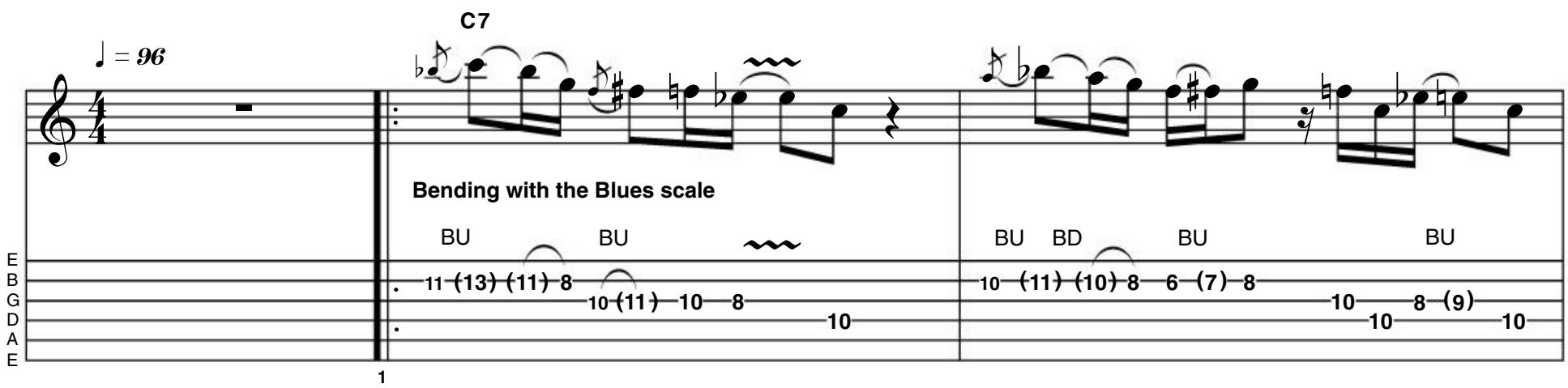
## EXAMPLE 1 BENDING TO CHORD TONES

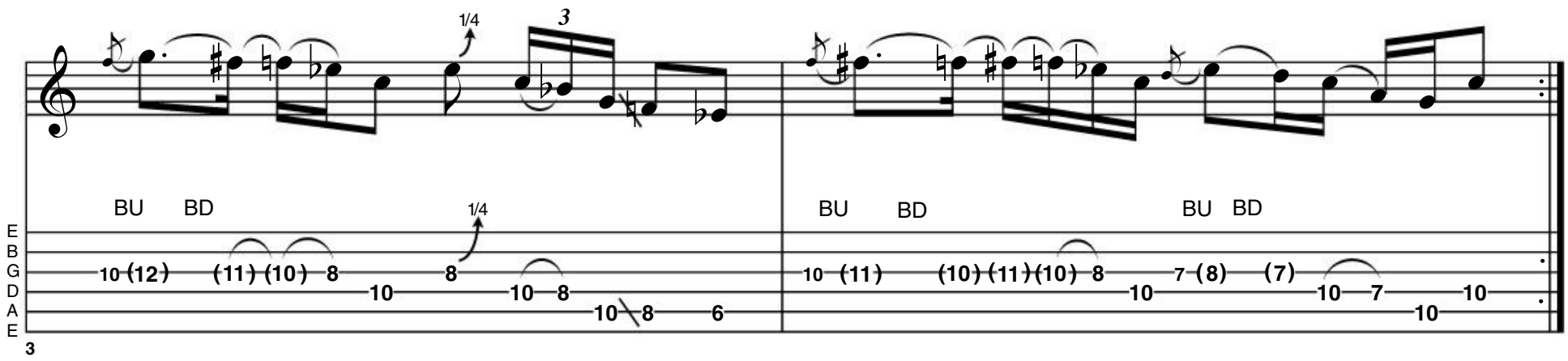
**Each bar in this example shows a bend to a different chord tone of C7 - root, ♭7th, 5th and 3rd, played as licks to give a bluesy context to the bends.**




## EXAMPLE 2 MIXING CHORD TONES AND BLUES SCALE

**In this example, I'm starting to use the notes of the Blues scale as well as targeting the chord tones of C7. This is why there are F# notes (consider them as G♭ notes too; the ♭5) here.**

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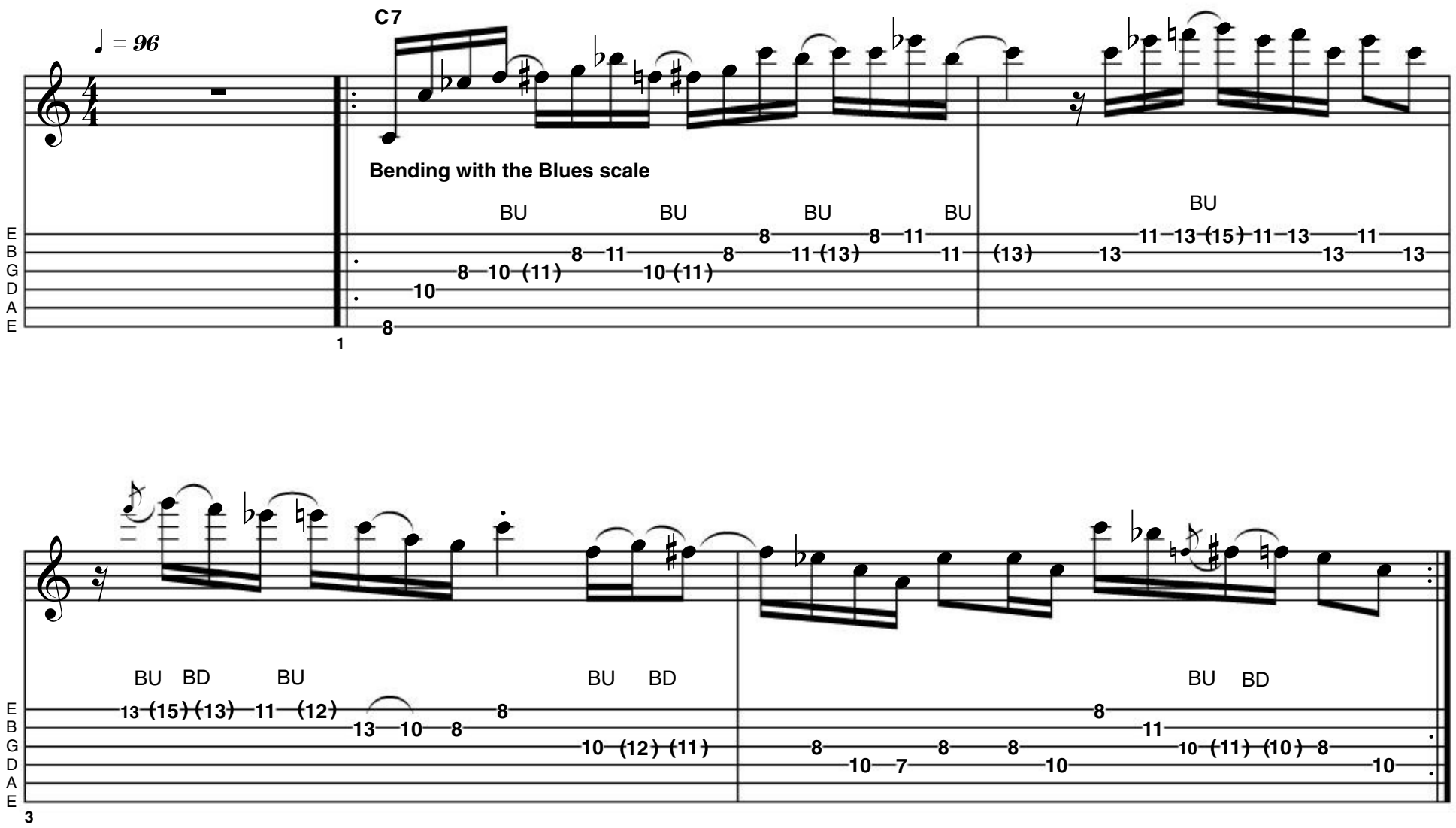
## EXAMPLE 3 **MATT MEETS JIMI**

**I was thinking of Matt Schofield and Jimi with this line. Bar 2 is a nice modern blues set piece. The end of bar 2 is my nod to Jimi.**

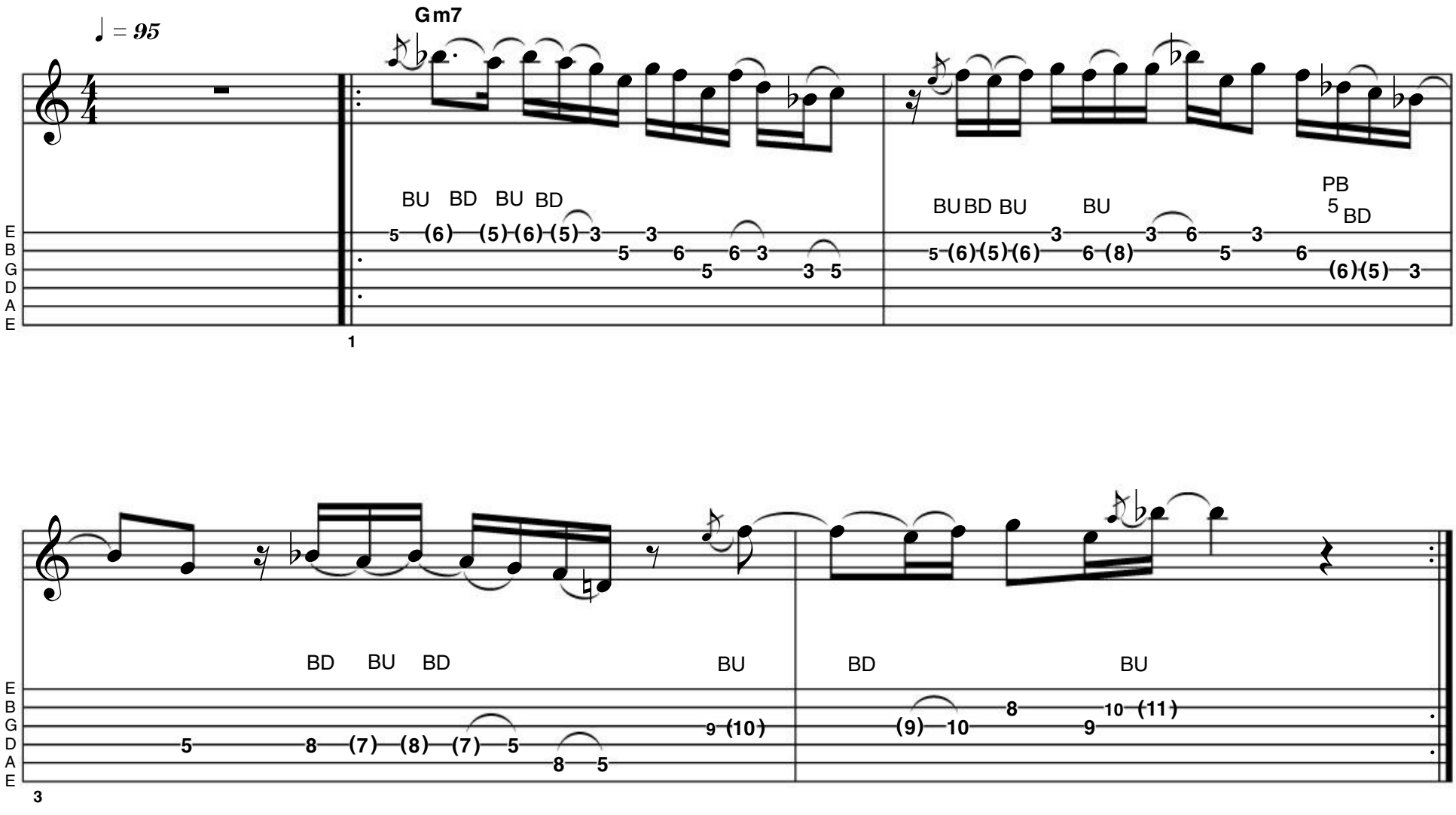



## EXAMPLE 4 **SMALL TO LARGE BENDS**

**We're mixing Blues and Mixolydian here. The bend from Minor to Major 3rd is tricky, but stick with it. Watch out in particular for the high Major 3rd bends in bar 4!**

## EXAMPLE 5 **PRE-BENDS**

**This idea targets mostly the chord tones of Gm7. For the pre-bend in bar 3 (C up to D♭), aim to make the pre-bend silent, so you only hear the target note.**




## EXAMPLE 6 **MULTI-NOTE BENDS**

**We start with a bend from the Minor 3rd to Major 3rd on the fifth string. In bar 3, F is bent up to G and released down a semitone before releasing again back to F.**

# NEW ALBUMS

*A selection of new and reissued guitar releases, including* ***Album Of The Month***

## ALBUM OF THE MONTH

### BONNIE RAITT
JUST LIKE THAT
*Redwing Records* 9/10

"On this record, I wanted to stretch," says Bonnie Raitt of this, her first album for six years. "I always want to find songs that excite me, and what's different this time is that I've tried styles and topics I haven't touched on before." A few years ago, Bonnie was on tour with James Taylor and it was so popular that it kept getting extended into different territories. Then the world shut down and things would never be quite the same. She kept a presence, as many artists did, online and was vocal in environmental and political issues, but the promise of a relaxation of the worldwide lockdown meant that plans were forged for a new album. It gave her the opportunity to move into new areas, covering songs like Made Up Mind by Bros. Landreth and Here Comes Love by the California Honeydrops. We're taken on a fairground ride of genres and styles here, but all bound together by Bonnie's remarkable vocal power and range, not forgetting her considerable aplomb on slide, acoustic and electric guitars. The title track pulls the listener in with its emotion and lyrical depth. When We Say Goodnight is an instant classic, with its gradual build to some moody slide guitar. If it's funk you want, look no further than Waitin' For You To Blow, a masterclass with a serious message – about 'the devil on your shoulder during recovery'. A soulful return for the first lady of blues and rock [DM]

### GRAHAM NASH
SONGS FOR BEGINNERS/WILD TALES
*Proper Records* 9/10

A new album from one of the quartet that defined the early 1970s singer-songwriter era is always big news. A live album that outlines two of that artist's first solo albums makes it somehow an altogether special event. Such is the case here as Graham Nash, one of the founders of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, is recorded in concert performing his albums Songs For Beginners (1971) and Wild Tales (1974) in their entirety. "I've been trying to figure out why Songs For Beginners and Wild Tales were so popular and I think it's that intimacy and that immediacy of my emotions..." notes Nash. We'd agree. Songs like Wounded Bird, Military Madness and I Used To Be A King are straight from the heart and as relevant today as five decades ago. A sublime listening experience. [DM]

### ENVY OF NONE
ENVY OF NONE
*Kscope* 8/10

This is a new band that features Rush guitarist, Alex Lifeson with Andy Curran (bass/vocals), Alf Annibalini (guitar/keys) and Maiah Wynne (vocals). The 11-track album has a pop meets synth-rock vibe (think Garbage meets Depeche Mode) that highlights Maiah's unique vocals.

Opener, Never Said I Love You would be an ideal single with pulsing synth-rock drive and rich harmonised vocals. Shadow is simpler with electronic drums and acoustic guitar interjections. Liar is a dark grunge rocker with ambient and energised guitar parts. Spy House has a laid-back filtered rock guitar riff that works great with the vocals. Nice leads too. Dogs Life is an intense stomper, full of energy and ambient guitars. Old Strings blends synths, ambient guitars and vocals while the acoustic-driven instrumental Western Sunset is beautiful. It may be a new musical avenue, but Alex and co sound most appealing. [JS]

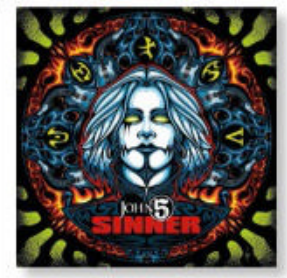
### JACK BROADBENT
RIDE
*Crows Feet Records* 8/10

English singer and guitarist Jack Broadbent has an appealing bluesy meets Americana style on his fifth album, Ride. That said, there are other elements on offer such as on Midnight Radio which features bluesy-jazz comping, a smooth slide solo and a swish

drum stomp. Feelgood rock vibes ooze from I Love Your Rock 'N' Roll with a rich vocal delivery and warm crunchy guitar. New Orleans has tasty fingerpicking chords and slide while Hard Livin' has dynamic chords and an emotive slide solo. There may only be eight tracks, but you're sure to take the journey many times over after first listen. [JS]

### JOHN 5 & THE CREATURES
SINNER
*Big Machine Records* 8/10

John 5 has graced many albums and stages as a side man, from Dave Lee Roth to (now) Rob Zombie. On his latest 10-track album you get to hear the rock plus country and western swing styles that make him unique. Welcome To The Island opens with an electro-rock beat and Malmsteen-esque arpeggio phrasing, performed with an overdriven dry tone. Doom and




thrash combine on For I Have Sinned as tight rhythms provide the backdrop for crazy legato and blazing arpeggios. The stomp-metal groove of Euphoria features vocal whispers of Carla Harvey and some crazy rhythmic lead lines. Que Pasa features guest vocals from Dave Mustaine and slick lead shredding. The Les Paul and Mary Ford classic, How High The Moon gets a rework here with its clean electric referencing Les's arpeggios. The rockabilly feel of Queen's Crazy Little Thing Called Love has appeal while album closer, Georgia On My Mind is lovely. Big chops and broad sonics, that's John 5. [JS]

### VOLA
LIVE FROM THE POOL
*Mascot Records* 9/10

This Danish/Swedish quartet has a very modern blend of prog, metal and ambient electronic styles with Asger Mygind's vocals and guitar taking centre stage. What makes this album unique is, not only is it their first live album but it was recorded at an intimate swimming pool gig in Denmark during the pandemic. The reverb alone makes for a very immersive experience and the live footage is stunning. It's a big sound and their blend of power, aggression and beauty is quite something. 24 Light Years is evidence of this, as is the clever Alien Shivers (synth gating overlaid by a metal riff) which has a beautifully emotive chorus. For a raw sound, Straight Lines is full on with a lurching rhythmic feel and choppy metal guitars. As for sounding huge, Inside You Fur is a stunner. If you hanker for a new modern metal band and love the blend of brutality and beauty, à la Devin Townsend, you'll want to check out Vola! [JS]

ALBUM REVIEWS BY JASON SIDWELL AND DAVID MEAD

# NEXT MONTH

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*Jazz for blues guitarists*
*What can blues players learn from one of the greatest jazz guitarists? John Wheatcroft has the answer!*

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*Mixing Major and Relative Minor*

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